

Historic and Architectural Resources of Little Compton, Rhode Island



Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission

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Historic and Architectural Resources of Little Compton, Rhode Island is published by the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, which is the State Historic Preservation Office.

Preparation of this publication has been funded in part by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior. The contents and opinions contained herein, however, do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the Department of the Interior.

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Since the original publication:

- >additional properties have been entered on the National Register;
- >some financial incentives referred to in these pages are no longer available;
- >some new financial incentives are available.

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The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission is your state agency for historical preservation. The Commission identifies and protects historic buildings, districts, landscapes, structures, and archaeological sites throughout the State of Rhode Island.

Cover: Sydney R. Burleigh (American, 1853-1931), "Laneway South of the Commons," ca. 1880, oil on canvas, privately owned. This bucolic scene of a lane on the Richmond Farm celebrates Little Compton's rural character; though painted more than a century ago, it presents an image that both remains current and deserves continued stewardship and preservation.

Title Page: Richmond Farm (ca. 1830, ca. 1890 et seq.), 59 South of Commons Road. This view to the north from South of Commons Road illustrates the intimate relationship between land and buildings that defines Little Compton's visual quality.

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PREFACE

The Historical Preservation Commission is the state office for historic preservation. It is Rhode Island's only statewide historic preservation program which identifies and protects historic properties and archaeological sites. Created in 1968, the Commission consists of sixteen members who serve in a voluntary capacity. Nine members are appointed by the Governor, among them an historian, an archaeologist, an architectural historian or architect, a museologist, and an anthropologist. Seven state officials also serve, including the Directors of the Departments of Environmental Management and Economic Development, the Chief of the Statewide Planning Program, the State Building Code Commissioner, the State Historic Preservation Officer, and the Chairmen of the House and Senate Finance Committees. The Commission employs a staff of historians, architectural historians, archaeologists, and architects.

The Historical Preservation Commission is responsible for developing a state historical preservation plan; conducting a statewide survey of historical sites and buildings, and from the survey nominating significant properties to the National Register of Historic Places and the State Register; administering programs of financial aid including grants, loans, and tax credits; reviewing federal and state projects to assess their effect on cultural resources; and regulating archaeological exploration on state land and under state territorial waters. The cumulative dollar value of the Commission's programs is \$253 million.

To date the Commission has surveyed 51,940 historic properties including 2074 archaeological sites; published forty-four neighborhood or town survey reports; nominated 12,009 properties to the State Register and National Register of Historic Places, including 121 historic districts; awarded \$5.4 million in matching grants to 337 projects in thirty-two communities; approved federal tax credits for 373 projects valued at \$226 million; monitored historic preservation easements on twenty-one properties in perpetuity and ninety-seven term easements; reviewed approximately 1200 state or federal projects annually; assisted and certified local government historic preservation programs in eleven communities; and implemented a \$3.5 million Historic Preservation Loan Fund.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission's surveys is to identify and record structures, sites, and areas of apparent historical, architectural, visual, or cultural significance within each community.

Surveys are conducted by driving or, in densely settled areas, walking all public streets. Each property selected by a surveyor is photographed and recorded on a standard historic building data sheet, which includes places to note physical characteristics of the property and its use, condition, and architectural style or period. Historical information, usually not available on the site, is obtained during subsequent research and added to the data sheet. Finally, a written report is prepared to provide a context for evaluating the historical and architectural significance of properties in the survey area.

The significance of each surveyed property is evaluated in a preliminary fashion by Commission staff. Properties which appear to meet the criteria for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places are identified for further study and review. Though all aspects of local history are investigated to develop an adequate context for evaluation, the emphasis of the surveys is on existing historic properties.

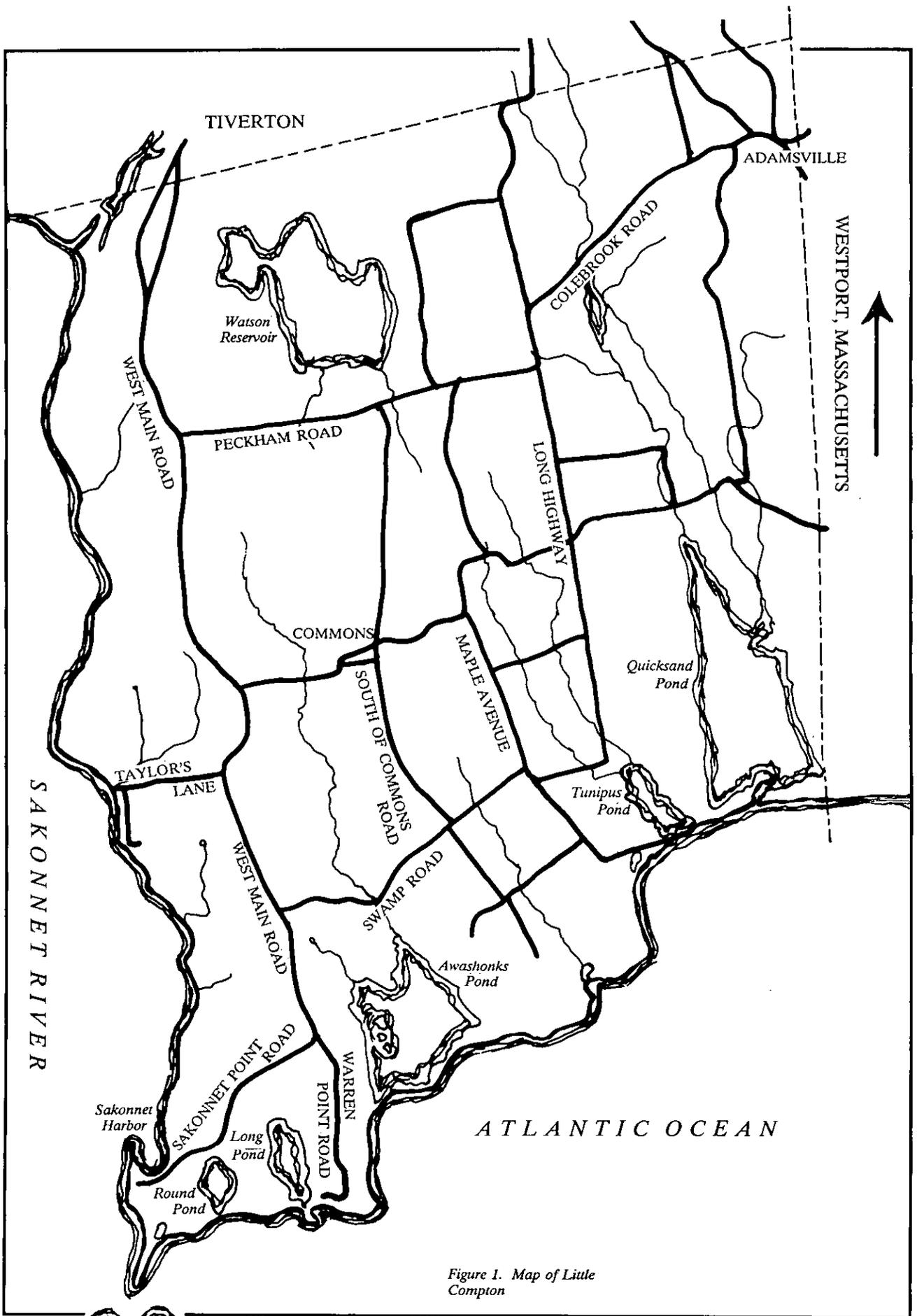


Figure 1. Map of Little Compton

SETTING

ENVIRONMENT

Little Compton's natural setting is fundamental to understanding the town as it exists today. Its location, landforms, bodies of water, vegetation, and climate have played important parts in the town's historical development, and these physical qualities, both individually and collectively, continue to play determining roles in a town with a remarkable sense of place.

Located in the southeast corner of Rhode Island, Little Compton is a rough trapezoid of just over twenty-three square miles, which comprise just over two per cent of the state's land area. With Sakonnet Point at its southwest, Little Compton juts into the Atlantic Ocean at the mouth of the East Passage of Narragansett Bay, also known as the Sakonnet River. While more than half of Little Compton's border is coastal, the absence of a deep, natural harbor has long discouraged intense maritime development. The town, along with Tiverton to the north, is part of the mainland politically separated from the rest of the state by Massachusetts, of which the town was a part until 1747. Little Compton's isolation has been a key, at times self-reinforcing, factor in the town's development throughout its history.

The town's topography is the weathered product of glacial activity during the last ice age, approximately 11,000 years ago. The town's bedrock is granite, like the adjacent mainland but unlike the rest of the Narragansett Basin, and the vast sheets of ice that overrode the land subdued the topography into one of gently rolling hills. The glaciers carried with them large quantities of soil and boulders which were deposited randomly as the ice melted and left an irregular kame-and-kettle topography in some places and, in others, blocked pre-existing waterways and left low swamps. Today the land rises gently from the water, rolls in hills, dells, and marshes across the town, and reaches a maximum elevation of 190 feet in the northeast corner, just west of Adamsville.

Water within the town is largely still and has provided little opportunity for transportation or industrial use. On the south shore are several saltwater coastal ponds, separated from the ocean by barrier beaches: Quicksand Pond, Tunipus Pond, Long Pond, and Round Pond. The 225-acre Briggs Marsh complex is historically valuable as a wildlife preserve: one of the best spots in the state for migratory Canadian geese, it is the source of the area's oldest name, Sakonnet, translated as "the black goose comes." The only natural freshwater pond is Simmons Pond, fed by Cold Brook and draining into Quicksand Pond, in the northeast part of town. The Watson Reservoir, near the Tiverton Town Line, is manmade. The few brooks in town—Adamsville Brook, Cold Brook, Sisson Brook, Dunderly Brook—are shallow and slow moving, but they generated small amounts of power to run a few grist mills in previous centuries. There are no rivers.

Woodland fills slightly less than half of the town's land surface, less than the statewide average of sixty-four per cent. Nineteen per cent of the land is farmed, and much of the open land is filled with grasses. Black, red, and white oaks and hickories predominate here—as did elm and chestnut before destruction by blight—with scattered stands of hemlock and white pine.

Like other seaside towns in southern New England, Little Compton's climate is relatively moderate, warmed in winter by the Gulf Stream current of the Atlantic

Ocean and cooled in summer by sea breezes. Rainfall averages between forty and forty-five inches per year. These conditions have long encouraged agricultural use of the land.

SETTLEMENT

Little Compton is a sparsely settled town with a small permanent population. In 1986, Little Compton's 3367 permanent residents, scattered over the town's twenty-three square miles, gave it an average population density of 146 persons per square mile, well below the state average of 902 per square mile. The small villages of the Commons and Adamsville do not represent population centers of great density. The population is predominantly white; only two blacks were counted in the 1980 census. The largest identifiable ethnic group is Portuguese; Little Compton has had a significant Portuguese population since the late nineteenth century: in 1895, Portuguese comprised 14.5 per cent of the population. However, these figures do not tell the complete story for Little Compton, which has a large—but generally undocumented—influx of summer residents, many of whom reside seasonally near the water, particularly in the southern part of town.

Overland transportation in Little Compton has always been limited to roads. The town's public road system roughly follows a north-south or east-west orientation. This somewhat skewed grid generally reflects the borders of land divisions made in the seventeenth century. A number of narrow private lanes extend from these public roads: some of these are old farm lanes, while others are new. The few, small, regularized-grid areas are isolated, twentieth-century suburban-like subdivisions. Railroads never came to Little Compton; it is one of only four mainland Rhode Island towns that have never seen rail service.

The economy of Little Compton is modest and limited. Agriculture is its largest, and only significant, component. There is no industry, and retail activity and businesses are restricted to a few firms which serve only the local population. There is little tourist trade—indeed no hotel exists in the town. Some year-round residents work in Fall River, New Bedford, Providence, or Boston, and a number of taxpayers, though not legal residents of Little Compton, live and work elsewhere. The town's economy is reflected in the way the land is used: a study in 1977 revealed that approximately sixty per cent of the town's land is not actively used in any way.

THE TOWNSCAPE

Facts and statistics can only hint the impressive physical presence of Little Compton found in its physical and cultural endowments. Isolated and remote, Little Compton has been relatively free from the political pressures or economic forces that have transformed much of the rest of Rhode Island into a dense, urban and suburban metropolis. The town's resistance to change—at first a result of its isolation, later due to deliberate decisions—has preserved a remarkable legacy that is the product of the interaction of countless centuries of natural evolution and several centuries of human occupancy. Today, Little Compton presents an idyllic picture, complete with rolling topography, a quiltwork pattern of stone-wall-bounded farms and woodland, complemented by marshes, saltwater ponds, barrier beaches, a rocky promontory at Sakonnet Point, old farm complexes, comfortable summer houses, winding roads, and tree-lined

villages of Adamsville and the Commons. All these elements combine to produce a townscape, the most sublime in Rhode Island, that projects the very image of a typical seaside New England town.

ORIGINS

ORIGINAL INHABITANTS

The history of Little Compton before its settlement by English colonists in the seventeenth century remains obscure. The Sokognates, one of the sub-tribes of the Wampanoags, occupied an area that included Little Compton. Several sites within the town are traditionally associated with the Indians, but only two archaeological sites have been identified: one in Wilbour Woods and one on John Dyer Road.

"A Bud From Plymouth's Mayflower"

Little Compton was settled in the late seventeenth century by a group of English colonists from Plymouth Plantation. The town's founding and its relationship to Plymouth—and later to Massachusetts Bay—are significant because they set the stage socially and politically and establish the importance of isolation to the town's development. Further, the early history has long been important in the town's collective historical consciousness.

ACQUIRING THE LAND

The Plymouth settlers, known much later as the Pilgrims, were Puritan separatists from the Church of England. Harried out of England, they went to the Netherlands. In 1620 they arrived in the New World, where they could both maintain their English heritage and language and enjoy freedom of worship. They were a tightly knit, impassioned, radical group. Their early joint-stock company and attempts at a communal economy had been dissolved by 1627, when the company's assets were distributed to the colony's adult males, excluding servants. Plymouth was administered by its freemen and later by a representative assembly called the General Court; its religious life was governed by members of the Congregational church. The colony did not thrive economically during the 1620s, and the establishment of the commercially successful Massachusetts Bay Colony at Boston in 1629 gave Plymouth a much needed boost.

Expansion from Plymouth's original settlement, on the west side of Massachusetts Bay, was more the product of land hunger than the colony's commercial success. Between 1630 and 1640, New England received thousands of Puritans escaping persecution in England, a trend that reversed between 1640 and 1650, as Puritans in England and Scotland rallied to the revolutionary cause at home. Nine new towns were added to Plymouth colony between 1630 and 1650—all of these north and east of Little Compton or on Cape Cod.

After 1650, the coming of age of second- and third-generation colonists necessitated further division and settlement of the Plymouth Plantation land, particularly in the western section of the colony. The desire of the English for land at the western portion of the colony came at a time when tensions were mounting between the new settlers and the Indians. The English colonies—including Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay, and Rhode Island—were constantly expanding and thus diminishing the Indians' lands.

The acquisition of land at Sakonnet did not occur quickly or easily. Awashonks, the sachem of the Sokognates, declined to negotiate the sale of the tribe's land in 1661. In 1666, a group of petitioners successfully appealed to the General Court to allow them to purchase land either at Sakonnet or on the south side of Weymouth, but nothing came of either request. By the early 1670s, however, the Sokognates—and Awashonks in particular—began to show increasing inclination to negotiate with the English. In 1671, the General Court

have agreed and voted that some force be raised and sent to the Indians att Saconet, to fech in their arms, and in defect thereof their persons, as occasions may require.¹

The expedition was apparently successful, for in the summer of that year the court noted its satisfaction at Awashonks's "voluntarily coming in now at last."² Awashonks soon declared herself

...fully resolved, while I live, with all fidelity to stand to my engagement, and in a peaceful submission to your commands to the best of my poor ability. ...being conscious to my self of my integrity and real intentions of peace, I doubt not but you will afford me all due encouragement and protection.³

Her solicitations of protection were probably justified: indeed one of her tribe had stolen arms from her for Wampanoag chief Metacomet (also known as King Philip), and not all of the Sokognates supported her treaties with the English.

The transfer of land at Sakonnet from the Indians to the English reflects division among the Indians. The question of land ownership among the Indians was generally unsettled, particularly from an English point of view. In the summer of 1673 for a price of seventy-five pounds, Awashonks negotiated the sale of land on the Sakonnet River to a committee of William Pabodie, Nathaniel Thomas, and Constant Southworth, all of Plymouth. The committee then had to purchase, for an additional thirty-five pounds, a larger parcel—which included the original purchase, negotiated with Awashonks—from Mammanah, Osomehau, Suckqua, and Annapush.

Tensions over land use and the colonists' treatment of the Indians erupted in the conflict of 1675-76 known as King Philip's War. The dispute between the English settlers, particularly those from Plymouth, and the Indians, particularly the Wampanoags led by King Philip, was resolved by the defeat of the Indians and the establishment of English supremacy in the region. None of the conflict took place in Little Compton—probably because of the area's isolation, and almost certainly because of Awashonks's pro-English position, ratified by a compact signed by Benjamin Church and Awashonks at Treaty Rock in the summer of 1675. Awashonks's amicable relationship with the new settlers is reflected by

¹ Benjamin Franklin Wilbour, *Notes On Little Compton* (Little Compton, 1970), p. 17.

² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

their setting off a three-quarter-mile-square parcel for her in May of 1675. In June of 1676, Awashonks's son Peter presented himself to the Plymouth General Court and joined Benjamin Church's forces to rout out the remaining Indians of King Philip's decimated forces.

Against the turmoil of the 1670s, Little Compton's creation seems remarkably tranquil. The relative isolation of the Sakonnet lands may well have diminished their importance to the Wampanoags, who were more immediately threatened on closer fronts. The apparently pro-English attitude of Awashonks seems to have encouraged the atmosphere of mutual—if at times a bit uneasy—trust and respect that guided the transfer of the Sakonnet lands from the Indians to the English.

SETTLING THE LAND

The General Court at Plymouth very much favored early settlers of the colony and distributed Sakonnet land first to "old freemen," then to children born or reared in Plymouth colony.⁴ The land-granting policy was established as recompense for the settlers who had suffered privation during its early years. By the 1660s, preferential treatment had extended to former servants. In 1661, the General Court agreed that the "old servants," who had land due to them—as well as freemen—could covenant to buy land on the Sakonnet River; all who were allotted land had been colony residents before 1640.

The parcel that the proprietors acquired by deed in November of 1673 was an approximately four-and-a-half-square-mile rectangle located in the town's northwest corner, between the present-day Tiverton town line and Taylor's Lane. Within the parcel, there were thirty-two surveyed lots, narrow rectangular strips that ran the full width of the purchase, arranged in linear fashion north to south. A road, today's West Main Road, paralleled the shore and ran through the middle of the lots.

The petitioners for the Sakonnet lands had met in July of 1673 to establish articles of association. The men who would become proprietors of the Sakonnet lands agreed upon several conditions of land ownership. A proprietor could neither appropriate more than two parcels of land on penalty of forfeiting the excess to the company nor could he dispose of his land to one not related to him without majority consent of the company. The conditions reflect the decreasing availability of unclaimed land by 1675—similar conditions were imposed at other contemporary settlements—and the desire of colony leaders to decrease land speculation.

The Plymouth Court declared the lands at Sakonnet a township in 1674, and on 10 April of that year the landowners met at Duxbury, paid their dues, and drew lots for the first purchase. How quickly these lots were settled remains unknown. Only Benjamin Church is recorded as having occupied his purchase before King Philip's War, but he abandoned his property during the war and later settled in Bristol.

Division of the land continued into the 1690s, interrupted for two years during and after the time of King Philip's War. The first drawing for lots held in the town itself, a parcel of fifteen-acre lots in the northeastern corner of the town,

⁴George D. Langdon, Jr, *Pilgrim Colony: A History of New Plymouth, 1620-1691* (New Haven, 1966), p. 46.



Figure 2. The Commons. View to the east showing the Old Burying Ground and Congregational Church on the Common and the enframing public and private buildings.

occurred in July of 1674. The following May, land to the southwest was divided into fifty- and eighteen-acre lots at a drawing in Duxbury; at the same time, the adjacent three-quarter-square-mile parcel, on the Sakonnet River, was given to Awashonks. Thirty-acre lots were offered in early April 1678, and both the land given in 1675 to Awashonks⁵ and land at Sakonnet Point were drawn on 6 July 1681, for the last time at Plymouth. The last seventeenth-century division, of the twenty-four acre lots located in the north of town, was held in Little Compton in March 1694.

The proprietors voted in March of 1677 to set aside a parcel of the undivided lands at Sakonnet for a common. The creation of a combined civic and religious focus, completely at odds with Rhode Island settlements of the seventeenth century, was common in the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay colonies. On 28 August 1677, they designated the present common, near the town's center, for meetinghouse, burying ground, and animal pound; at the same meeting, they offered three divisions of house lots around the commons.

The legacy of Little Compton's seventeenth-century development remains evident in the town's plan and road system. The plan is typical of the townships established by Plymouth Plantation in the seventeenth century, and its organic form can still be seen in the smaller towns of Bristol and Plymouth Counties, Massachusetts. The nucleus is the common land with meetinghouse, small house lots, and burial ground; the roads spread to outlying lands are in larger parcels—here originally ranging in size from fifteen to thirty acres.

The establishment of the Commons in 1677—three years after the first land division—probably reflects the instability of the town's first years during King Philip's War, as well as the proprietors' desire by 1677 to proceed with the town's settlement. The Commons was selected by vote that "...all the proprietors shall go thither to view and give their judgements concerning the premises..."⁶ Its setting on a hillock above marshes and streams, its irregular shape, and its lack of strict cardinal alignment imply an organic, topographical orientation. Its location at the geographical center of the town suggests a practical, traditional approach to designating the town's civic and religious focus.

Scarce physical evidence of early building in Little Compton hinders understanding early development patterns. Surviving buildings from the seventeenth century are farmhouses outlying the central common. The creation of house lots around the Commons implies that settlement may have occurred there as well. The variance among early lot sizes suggests the presence of houses around the commons with outlying fields as well as discrete, outlying farmsteads.

While the town's remoteness, at the western edge of the Plymouth Plantation, had little effect on the town's original physical organization, the isolation seems to have been a factor in the town's early religious and political life. Little Compton may have physically resembled other Plymouth towns, but its religious and civic activity less closely paralleled those highly structured and integrated Plymouth institutions.

⁵What became of Awashonks after King Philip's War remains unknown. She seems to have survived the war, and legend maintains that she is buried within the town. In the context of her behavior toward the English colonists, it seems strange that the land would have been wrested from her.

⁶Wilbour, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

The early history of the Congregational Church in Little Compton is obscure, perhaps because its organizational years saw sporadic activity which may also reflect the decline of Plymouth Colony itself during the late seventeenth century. In creating the new township, the Plymouth Court ordered Little Compton's establishment "...especially for the settleing of such a society there as may be instrumental for the managing and carrying on of the worships of God."⁷ Little Compton, like adjacent Dartmouth, Massachusetts,⁸ did not immediately establish an official, Congregational Church. It was not until 1701 that a Congregational minister was in continuous residence in the town, despite the town's setting aside ample land for his use and support. There are several plausible explanations for the lack of an established church in the town's early years. The fledgling community with a small population could probably ill afford to support a minister, and—complementarily—such a community perhaps held little appeal for a minister. The cooling of Puritan religious ardor toward the end of the seventeenth century, particularly evident in the western part of the colony,⁹ could not have encouraged the settlers at Little Compton to support a Congregational minister. Throughout the 1680s, the town did not pay a ministerial tax levied by the Plymouth Court, and in 1686 the Court therefor fined the town twenty pounds for "...contempt and neglect..."¹⁰ Further, by 1700 Little Compton had a sufficient number of Quakers—who had no interest in supporting a Congregational minister—to build a Quaker Meeting House, the first strictly religious structure in the town. It was located on West Main Road on the site of the present Quaker Meeting House. The mixing of the two denominations, Congregational and Quaker, certainly indicates a liberal attitude toward religious tolerance and relates Little Compton more to nearby Rhode Island than to Plymouth Colony.

Connections between the Congregational Church and the town of Little Compton, however, remained strong well into the eighteenth century. For over thirty years, the two shared a meetinghouse, built in 1693 on the east end of the common. In 1724, the Congregationalists built a meetinghouse strictly for worship just south of the shared meetinghouse, on the site of the present church. The town meeting continued to elect the Congregational minister until 1787.

Politically, the town was equally independent minded. At the end of the seventeenth century, the war being waged in Canada between England and France placed on Plymouth Colony an increased tax burden which was passed on to its towns. Several towns were unable to pay, but Little Compton alone in Plymouth Colony—and in Massachusetts Bay into which Plymouth was merged in 1692—refused to pay until a military expedition marched into the town to enforce compliance. As in religious matters, the town seems to have participated minimally in the politics of Plymouth and the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, Little Compton was a modest, sparsely settled agricultural community with a population of just over 600. The fields and farms that spread across rolling hills gradually were being cleared for crops and livestock and divided by stone walls. Along the town's shoreline,

⁷Wilbour, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

⁸In the seventeenth century, Dartmouth (established 1652) included Westport, Dartmouth, New Bedford, Acushnet, and Fairhaven.

⁹Langdon, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

¹⁰Wilbour, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

Figure 3. William Pabody House (ca. 1690, ca. 1765, ca. 1890), 561 West Main Road. The original, eastern section was supplemented by the section west of the entrance in the late 18th century.



Figure 4. Thomas Bailey House (ca. 1700), 14 Grinnell Road.



Figure 5. Wilbor House (1690 et seq.), 548 West Main Road. View to the west showing the original, eastern section, with restored diamond-pane casement windows.



residents gathered fish and shellfish for food and seaweed for fertilizer. A developing network of roads included the Great West Road, Long Highway, South of Commons Road, Brownell Road, John Dyer Road, and Shaw Road—all established in the 1670s—and the highway to the meeting house (Meeting House Lane), established in 1698. Around the common stood a town meetinghouse and a handful of modest dwellings.

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY BUILDING

Seventeenth-century buildings are rare in Little Compton. Probably little was built during the town's lightly populated early years, and even less survived. Agricultural outbuildings, taverns, and shops must have existed in seventeenth-century Little Compton, but the forms these buildings took were never recorded. Only houses and the town meetinghouse have been documented in any way, but little is known about them as a group. A handful has been studied, and old photographs and diaries provide some information about those that have disappeared.

The early houses of Little Compton were simple, wood-frame structures with stone chimneys and foundations. This combination of materials in seventeenth-century New England is unique to southeastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island, where stone was readily available. Structures were built using post-and-beam, plank-wall construction, a technology common to mainland Rhode Island and the Plymouth colony. Houses seem to fit into the two basic types found in Plymouth Plantation: the end-chimney type and the center-chimney type, both with and without rear lean-tos.¹¹ Here, as elsewhere in Rhode Island and southeastern Massachusetts, construction of the end-chimney form is not documented beyond the beginning of the eighteenth century, while the center-chimney form continued throughout the eighteenth century and into the early years of the nineteenth century.

The earliest surviving houses in Little Compton—the Wilbour House and the Pabody House, both on West Main Road—were end-chimney houses with one-room lean-tos at the rear. They faced south and had a large chimney at the western end and small, irregularly placed openings on the south, east, and north. Both houses were enlarged in the eighteenth century by an addition on their western sides, giving them the appearance of center-chimney houses. Their framing systems, however, reveal their original configurations. It is possible that other seemingly center-chimney houses in Little Compton may also have been similarly altered.

Perhaps the oldest of the center-chimney dwellings in Little Compton is the Thomas Bailey House (ca. 1700), 14 Grinnell Road. A shingled, story-and-a-half, gambrel-roof house—remodeled in the eighteenth century and enlarged in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—it is a common eighteenth-century rural dwelling type.

The meetinghouse, built in 1693 on the Commons, was used for both religious meetings and town meetings, a combination of uses common for Massachusetts Bay Colony meetinghouses. Old photographs show it two-and-a-half stories high with a center chimney and center entrance in its irregular, south-facing facade.

¹¹Richard M. Candee, "Documentary History of Plymouth Colony Architecture, 1620-1700," *Old-Time New England* 59(1968-69), No. 3, pp. 59-71; No. 4, pp. 105-111; and 60(1969), No. 2, pp. 37-53.

Like contemporary dwellings, it had heavy timber-frame, plank-wall construction. The building was neither documented nor analyzed before its destruction by fire in 1917.

In addition to these buildings, portions of several others survive incorporated into later structures. The best known of these is a seventeenth-century section, built by William and Elizabeth Pabody, within the Wilbour House at 521 West Main Road. The tradition of the reuse of older structures and their retention in later building campaigns speaks to the conservative nature of Little Compton building traditions. A thorough study of the structural systems of the town's older buildings could shed further light on its early architecture.

A FARMING TOWN, 1700-1900

After the beginning of the eighteenth century, Little Compton settled into a steady existence as a farming community. As a rural, seaside New England town in 1700, it must have resembled many other similar settlements in appearance, population, crops, buildings, and daily life. What distinguishes Little Compton from these other towns is how long a seemingly uneventful, yet productive agricultural era lasted. For nearly two hundred years, from the beginning of the eighteenth century until the end of the nineteenth, the town's agricultural production and its population changed remarkably little in comparison with the rest of the state and the region. As for most of the town's history, Little Compton's isolation played a significant role in both the maintenance of its agricultural and architectural traditions and the preservation of many of its buildings, structures, and sites.

The population changes in Little Compton are a telling introduction to the town as an agricultural community during these two centuries. Between 1748 and 1900, Rhode Island's population increased over 1200 per cent, from 32,773 to 428,556. During the same period, Little Compton's population decreased 1.7 per cent, from 1152 to 1132. The overall decrease in population establishes Little Compton's position as a declining town over these two centuries, and closer examination of the town's population figures reveals how the decline occurred. Little Compton grew modestly throughout the eighteenth century: the increases in population suggest that the children of those who had settled there were remaining in Little Compton, and those who did leave town were replaced by a few newcomers. After suffering a slight decline in population between 1790 and 1800, the town reached its peak population of 1580 in 1810; the town's population did not surpass that figure until the 1950s. The population declined throughout the nineteenth century, save for two periods: during the 1840s population increased by 135, or ten per cent, and during the 1880s it increased by seventy-three, or almost seven per cent, primarily because of Portuguese immigration. Following both of these increases the population continued to decline—just like the descendants of the early settlers, these newcomers and their offspring were leaving town.

The town's gradual decline in population and its continuing isolation from the state's developing transportation and manufacturing network are keys to understanding the town's development in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Little Compton never experienced dramatic change, and its history was marked only by the slow evolution of civic and religious institutions, the development of agriculture and fishing, and the occasional division of family farm land and construction of new farmsteads.

THE POLITICAL SCENE, 1690-1820

Between 1690 and 1790, Little Compton was subjected to several changes in political organization which had little apparent immediate impact on the town itself. These included two shifts in colonial jurisdiction and two in national sovereignty. All were essentially external changes, and only in the national shifts did residents of Little Compton play an active role.

In 1692, Plymouth Colony was absorbed into Massachusetts Bay, but Little Compton was little affected by the change. And in 1747, Little Compton became part of Rhode Island. Rhode Island's Charter of 1663 had established the colony's eastern border as a line approximately three miles east of the eastern shore of Narragansett Bay. This boundary claim, like those for Rhode Island's western boundaries, remained in dispute among the neighboring colonies of Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Rhode Island during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The dispute was resolved by the Privy Council in London only in 1747, when the towns of Bristol, Tiverton, and Little Compton were removed from the Massachusetts Bay Colony and added to Rhode Island. The late settlement of the question probably owes more to imperial reorganization than to political or economic demands made by the residents of Little Compton themselves; however, the same year that Little Compton became part of Rhode Island, the General Assembly passed a law requiring the Town of Middletown to build a broad driftway across Sachuest Beach "...for His Majesty's subjects to pass and re-pass...for the want of which the inhabitants of Little Compton and Middletown are greatly hindered."¹² This section of Aquidnick Island is the closest point to Little Compton, directly opposite the end of Taylor's Lane, which was improved in the mid-eighteenth century for access to the water; the need for improvement suggests the existence of or increased demand for ready access to Newport.

While the American Revolution touched the lives of some Little Compton residents, it did so elsewhere. As a vulnerable coastal town Little Compton was very much concerned with the Revolution: its events and local citizens' reactions to them are minutely chronicled in town histories. Town residents fought in the Battle of Bunker Hill, the Battle of Rhode Island, and elsewhere, but neither conflict nor occupation ever occurred in Little Compton. The occupation of Newport occasioned the British blockade of the east passage of Narragansett Bay, and six watch houses were established along the Sakonnet River. Further, a number of refugees from the occupied island of Aquidnick fled to Little Compton and Tiverton; though seldom pursued by the British, their presence in the town could only have heightened local residents' awareness of the war. The only recorded act of violence associated with the American Revolution was the murder of Captain William Taggart's son by Loyalists at Saconnet Farm.

After the Revolution, Little Compton was an early, ardent advocate of the adoption of the Constitution. The town's officially abandoning civic selection of the Congregational minister in the same year that the United States Constitution was drafted is probably more than coincidence. A resolution passed by the town in January 1788 cited the "...extreme need... of a well organized, energetic national government..." and endorsed the "...new federal constitution as a plan of government well adapted to the present critical situation of our national affairs."¹³

¹²*Rhode Island Colonial Records* (1747), Vol. 5, p. 275.

¹³Little Compton Town Records, 1788, cited in Wilbour, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

Rhode Island support for the Constitution came primarily from the wealthy mercantile interests in Providence, Bristol, and Newport; most rural Rhode Island farming communities opposed the state's joining the Union. Little Compton's anomalous position may perhaps be explained by some yet-to-be revealed economic factors, by associations with nearby Newport, or by local political inclinations more similar to those of neighboring Massachusetts than to those of Rhode Island, from which the town was somewhat isolated.

The War of 1812-15 was, in some ways, a replay of the Revolution for Little Compton. The same fears and the same precautions held sway, and the town's involvement was much the same. British ships blockaded the east passage of the bay, the ships' crews' theft of produce and livestock annoyed the town's coastal farmers, but no hostilities occurred.

Little Compton's geographic and social positions influenced its role in and its attitude toward the broad sweep of political history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Its physical insulation from the centers of political and military activity in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island discouraged active participation in those events within the town itself. But its perceived vulnerability to the hostilities themselves and its communication with Newport served to heighten town residents' awareness of political events, particularly those—like the Revolution and the adoption of the Constitution—which could most significantly affect their lives and livelihoods.

AGRICULTURE

From the beginning, agriculture has been both the dominant economic activity in Little Compton and the most important influence in the town's physical evolution. The cycles of agricultural activity in Little Compton reflect the town's historical and economic development. Farming ruled life in Little Compton, and, until the late nineteenth century, agricultural pursuits played a role in every household. In fact and in perception, farming has largely effected the creation of a cohesive rural fabric from the town's land, buildings, walls, and roads. The legacy of this activity are the farm complexes, groups of buildings important both architecturally and historically.

Little Compton was predominantly agricultural in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with only a handful of other concomitant activities: grist mill, saw mill, tavern, subsistence fishing. Many of the town's farms in the eighteenth century provided much of the food and clothing required by the families who tended them.¹⁴ There is little to indicate that Little Compton's farms provided crops, poultry, dairy products, or meat to any urban center on a regular or significant basis, but it seems likely that some of the farms' produce was sold, probably in village stores in Adamsville or the Commons.

During the nineteenth century farming practices changed in Little Compton. As early as 1838, three distinct types of New England farms had been identified: self-sufficient farms whose owners had a principal trade or profession, self-sufficient farms whose owners were principally farmers, and commercial farms that were agricultural businesses.¹⁵ Such categories well describe the evolving agricultural scene in Little Compton during the nineteenth century. Little Comp-

¹⁴Wilbour, *op. cit.*, pp. 118-122.

¹⁵Howard S. Russell, *A Long, Deep Furrow* (Hanover, 1976), p. 408.



Figure 6. View south to the Commons across open fields.

ton declined as an economic entity, but became a part of the expanding hinterlands of Providence, Newport, and Fall River as transportation networks improved and growing cities required larger amounts of produce. The town's agricultural production figures reflect this change. The number of farms in town dwindled in the second half of the nineteenth century from 285 in 1850 to 135 in 1895. The configuration of these farms changed too: the number of farms between five and fifty acres decreased most dramatically, while the number of those of several hundred acres remained stable toward the end of the century. Indeed, the average number of improved acres per farm increased from thirty-nine-and-a-half acres in 1850 to just over sixty-three acres in 1895. This shift in number and configuration probably reflects a change in agricultural practice from family farms to commercial farms, which provided produce and dairy products to urban markets.

Changes in the composition of the town's agricultural production reflected changes in the way the land was farmed. The production of corn, oats, potatoes, and hay declined slightly toward century's end; this produce was more often raised for home consumption, either for family members or for their livestock. The livestock population, too, showed a change: the number of oxen (used for draught), sheep (used for wool and meat), and swine (used for meat) declined, while the number of horses and cows remained relatively stable. Dairy production changed dramatically: between 1885 and 1895, butter production declined from 27,448 lbs to 8032 pounds, while milk increased from 23,049 gallons to over 213,000 gallons, and eggs from 106,500 to nearly 3.5 million. This shift in production probably accommodated the Providence, Fall River, and Boston markets, as well as a growing summer colony in Little Compton.¹⁶

The increase in egg production in particular reflects a growing interest in poultry production across New England¹⁷ and the enterprise of Little Compton poultry farmers in the second half of the nineteenth century. Notable among them were William Tripp, John Macomber, and Isaac C. Wilbour, who developed the Rhode Island Red. In the 1850s, Tripp and Macomber began experimenting with cross breeding of red cocks, imported from southeast Asia, with native hens. The offspring of their work became known locally as Tripp Fowls, and these birds Wilbour crossbred with his own stock, which included Plymouth Rocks. The bird he developed, known as the Rhode Island Red beginning in the early 1890s, was a vast improvement on previous commercial fowls because it laid more and larger eggs, and its larger body provided more meat.

LANDSCAPE

Little Compton's long agricultural development has shaped the landscape of the town. The creation of stone-walled fields; the establishment of a network of paths, lanes, and roads among these fields; and the building of farm complexes have created an extremely picturesque rural setting that recalls the farming that occurred here over several hundred years. Buildings and structures remain that record both the family farm, which produced the variety of daily necessities, and the later commercial farms, often devoted to only one or two chief products.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 517-518.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, p. 363.

Stone walls were first built in the seventeenth century to divide the early settlers' farm lands, and their construction continues today. Their creation was a necessity: the stones removed from fields to be tilled were stacked to divide those fields; and while their construction was slow and labor intensive, stone walls turned to practical use an impediment to farming and walls made more permanent, lower maintenance dividers than wood fences. Stone walls served as property boundaries and as internal dividers to separate cropland from livestock and house from fields. A few of the old stone walls may have been set up around wood lots, but most of the stone walls traversing woods once enclosed tilled fields which have reverted to forest in the twentieth century.

Small lanes and paths that edged the fields or passed between them connected the farmland with the farmhouse and its outbuildings. This network was an abiding part of the historic landscape, even if its constituent parts changed from year to year as crops were rotated and use of individual fields or pastures changed. Now diminished as agricultural pursuits have become less pervasive, networks of lanes and paths survive both as farm lanes and private roads to houses or residential complexes.

THE FARM COMPLEX

The farm complex is the most enduring legacy of Little Compton's agricultural past. The farmhouse and the barn are the most conspicuous elements in the complex, and they may often be the oldest as well. Both are large, and their size and function required that they be well constructed; consequently they enjoy a permanence that other, smaller parts of the complex may not. These smaller outbuildings include corn cribs, woodsheds, wellheads, wagon sheds, pigsties, poultry houses, privies, and—in the twentieth century—garages. The size and relative flimsiness of these smaller structures have occasioned their more frequent disappearance from the farm through deterioration, demolition, and removal for re-use in another capacity.

The forms of barns varied, probably through time and certainly because of use. In Little Compton the most standard is the rectangular-plan stone or shingle-clad structure with a hip or gable roof and a large opening with sliding doors centered in one of the long sides. Depending on topography, the barn could be banked into the side of a rise on one side; the lower story was exposed on three sides, while wagon and livestock access was available to two floors.

Several outbuildings developed distinct forms. The poultry house developed at least two. The shed-roof form had an entrance in one of the trapezoidal side walls and banded windows on the taller of the two side walls; this form was expanded in length and raised to two stories for commercial poultry farms. The peaked-roof form, with entrance in the gable end and banded windows on one of the long side walls, was also used. Both were covered with either roughly cut clapboard or shingle. Corn cribs typically were peaked-roof structures set on stone piers one to two feet above ground level, a posture that discouraged invasion by rodents. The entrance was in the gable end, and the interior was divided into bins—usually a maximum of four feet deep—and had open, slatted walls to allow air circulation. Corn cribs were usually shingled or clad in vertical-board siding, often with some space between the boards for air circulation.

A late nineteenth-century development in agricultural architecture and technology is the silo. Chopping green corn or clover and storing it in a silo, where it fermented but did not spoil, was an inexpensive means to store feed for cattle, and ensilage became increasingly common in the last two decades of the century.

The earliest silos were square and sometimes below ground, but they were soon replaced by the familiar round forms with conical roofs that dot the land today.¹⁸ Silos are more closely associated with the larger, commercial farms, and their construction parallels the development of the dairy industry as a major component in Little Compton's agricultural economy.

The arrangement of buildings within a farm complex varied. Until the early years of the nineteenth century, the principal building, the farmhouse, was frequently sited facing south. The barn and other outbuildings were usually located to the rear—or north—of the farmhouse and often establish a spatial relationship with an ell or back door. Occasionally, however, when topography or roads impinged, as in the Snell House at 60 Snell Road, outbuildings were located to the south of the south-facing house. In the nineteenth century, cardinal orientation of farmhouse fell out of use, and the placement of the outbuildings remained oriented toward the rear of the farmhouse.

The farm complex was most commonly located at the edge of the farm, near the road system. The farmhouse was located close to the road, but not necessarily facing it, and the outbuildings were set farther back. This orientation obtains for most of the state's rural, agricultural areas.

FISHING

As had the Indians before them, early town residents likely took advantage of the fish and shellfish available in the Sakonnet River and the Atlantic Ocean. Recreational fishing, clamming, and lobstering have long been a part of life in Little Compton, but fishing was never a predominant or typical livelihood for Little Compton residents. The 1850 census records no fishermen living there and counts only seventeen for 1865, nineteen for 1875, and eleven in 1885, the last year any were recorded there.

Maritime activity has played a varying role in Little Compton's economy. The lack of a good harbor in the nineteenth century made difficult the establishment of a large fleet. The *New Bedford Standard* reports on fishing in the 1860s and 1870s show great swings in the fishing economy: in 1862 there were fourteen fishing companies with a combined work force of approximately 150 men, most of whom lived elsewhere, and approximately 70 boats engaged in gleaning scup, tautog, rockfish, pollock, and bluefish.¹⁹ The 1865 census records a catch of almost 310,000 pounds of fish. By 1869, however, the paper reported that while scupfishing brought in over \$160,000 in 1868, less than \$10,000 was expected in 1869.²⁰ The catch dwindled down to 45,000 pounds by 1895, though the level of shellfish gathered somewhat increased, which suggests the diminution of fleet fishing and the rise of coastal fishing.

The legacy of fishing activity is relatively minor. Maritime-related structures date from the mid-twentieth century. The area around the harbor, just north of Sakonnet Point, is vulnerable and exposed to storms and heavy seas. Most of the

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 441

¹⁹ Wilbour, *op. cit.*, p. 140.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

building in the area was washed out to sea during the 1938 hurricane and again heavily damaged during the 1954 hurricane.

NINETEENTH-CENTURY TOWN DEVELOPMENT

Little Compton's nineteenth-century civic evolution is highlighted by the growth of its villages and institutions. A town center had existed at the Commons since the seventeenth century, but the nineteenth century saw the reinforcement of this village and the development of another. Closely related to village growth was the development of civic, religious, and social institutions, a phenomenon typical of communities throughout the country. These changes created important physical presences on the land which, with written records, present a picture of the evolving town.

VILLAGES

Villages arise around a focus, such as common ground, a public building, a mill, a store, a port or harbor, or a crossroad. As a remote town, beyond well-traveled roads or sea lanes, and as a town with negligible industrial potential, Little Compton developed only two real villages, The Commons and Adamsville, though a third settlement, now gone, existed at Sakonnet Point.

THE COMMONS

The seventeenth-century Commons was centrally located and has remained the pre-eminent village within the town since its creation. Its civic role was intensified as new buildings were erected around its periphery through the nineteenth century. The meetinghouse and the Congregational Church were supplemented by the Methodist Church (in two sequentially erected buildings), stores, blacksmith's shops, and civic buildings. While the town's first post office was established at Adamsville in 1804, a second post office, known as "Commons," opened here in 1834; the renaming in 1847 of the Commons post office to "Little Compton" (the name used until then for the Adamsville post office) suggests that the town's original village was perceived at that time as its most important. Indeed, during these years the Commons began to experience institutional growth that reinforced its importance: the new Congregational Church (1832), on the site of the original building; the new Methodist Church (1840), with a larger, successor structure (1872); the Number 8 School (ca. 1845); and the Union Cemetery (1850). The only institution not here was the Friends' Meeting House, which was always on West Main Road, probably because many of its members lived in that part of town. By the early 1860s, the Commons was home to the Congregational and Methodist Churches, the post office, the school, the Town House, two cemeteries, three dry goods stores, two smithies, a shoe shop, and nearly twenty residences. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the Commons saw the addition of a new Town Hall (1880), the Grange Hall (1902), the Brownell Library (1929), and the Josephine Wilbour School (1929), and several new houses.

Today the Commons continues to serve the town as it has through its recorded history. With school, church, town hall, post office, restaurant, stores, and offices—some of them occupying structures erected as dwellings—it is very much the town's gathering place. Indeed, it is unique in the state as a village that both

serves as a whole town's social and institutional focus and retains much of its historical setting, buildings, and function.

ADAMSVILLE

Adamsville, at the northeast corner of the town, is separated from the rest of Little Compton by Colebrook Woods. Nestled in a valley at the convergence of several roads and at the head of the Acoaxet River, it spreads across two towns, Little Compton and Westport, Massachusetts. As early as 1750, it was the site of a grist mill, and by the early nineteenth century a sawmill and a carding mill were also standing. These mills were built on the Massachusetts side of the village. Local tradition maintains that Adamsville was a minor port in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, an assertion somewhat substantiated by the Blaskowitz map of 1777, which shows the Acoaxet River navigable to Adamsville. Little Compton's first post office was established here in 1804, and by 1820, the village also had at least one general store, operated by Ebenezer P. Church. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Adamsville counted some twenty houses, the mills, the post office, a smithy, two stores, Gray's and Manchester's (the successor of Church's store and located in the same building at 10 Main Street), and Dr. White's drug store, located in his house at 35 Main Street. Institutional development in Adamsville is limited to the Electra Lodge No. 41, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, built on Main Street in 1877-78. The village is also the site of a monument, erected in 1925 to commemorate the Rhode Island Red, the chicken breed developed several miles from Adamsville in the nineteenth century.

Adamsville today is primarily residential, as it always has been, and changes to the village are those of use, rather than form. The smithy has been replaced with its twentieth-century equivalent, a gasoline station. One store remains, and the other has been converted to restaurant use. The Odd Fellows Hall now serves as a store. The village presents an image of the quiet, rural village—in contrast with the bustle of the Commons—its winding roads lined with trim white houses with dark shutters. It remains a place where, in the words of a long-time resident,

you can find peace and quiet in our sleepy little
village and a friendliness and neighborliness which
have come down from our earliest settlers.²¹

These two villages became important centers within the town during the nineteenth century, but they do not tell the whole story of civic and institutional growth during these years. Changes occurred townwide and, like the growth of the villages, they indicate the evolutionary patterns of life in a rural, primarily agricultural town. Larger, industrializing cities began to experience institutional growth earlier, more quickly and more complexly than small, rural, agricultural communities, but these differences are principally ones of scale, not type.

PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

Little Compton established a town asylum and poor farm in 1832. Like all New England towns during the eighteenth century, Little Compton "put out" the poor, sick, indigent, and insane to individuals in the town who were recompensed for

²¹Bertrand L. Shurtleff, "A Love Letter to Adamsville," *Providence Sunday Journal*, 27 September 1987.

their care; records indicate, too, that some rooms in the Town House were set aside for the impaired and imprisoned. This practice continued into the nineteenth century, though larger towns, like Newport and Providence had established workhouses by the mid-eighteenth century. During the nineteenth century, municipalities began to establish farms where these individuals could be housed in one place. Little Compton was among the first of the state's rural towns to set up a town farm; Smithfield created a town farm in the 1820s, and Tiverton followed in 1831. Like Tiverton, Little Compton acquired an existing farm complex, at 21 Grange Avenue, rather than building a new facility.

As with individuals under the town's care, Little Compton had provided some form of education for the young since the late seventeenth century. The first schoolmaster, Nathaniel Searles, was appointed in 1698. By 1712, the town had been divided into four school districts, with sessions held by the schoolmaster alternatively among them. Classes were often held in private houses, but at least one schoolhouse was built, the "Peaked Top School," which served the southwest part of town; moved several times and demolished in the late nineteenth century, "Peaked Top" is commemorated by a plaque on the stone wall at the corner of West Main and Swamp Roads and a reconstruction of the original, located on the grounds of Wilbour House on West Main Road.

Public education received increasing attention during the nineteenth century. In 1800 the General Assembly passed a law requiring statewide public education, but it had little effect before its repeal in 1803. The General Assembly enacted new legislation in 1828, and this law was reinforced by a comprehensive school law for the state sponsored by Henry Barnard and passed in 1845. Barnard was very much a presence on the educational scene in Rhode Island beginning in 1843, when he first addressed the legislature on ways to improve public schools. In 1844, the Little Compton Town Council ordered the division of the town into ten school districts and the construction of a new schoolhouse in each district. This effort, the first large-scale civic undertaking by the town, must reflect Barnard's aggressive leadership. He became state Commissioner of Public Education in 1845 and oversaw the creation of over fifty new schoolhouses across the state. The designs for these, many of them by the prodigious Providence architect Thomas Tefft, Barnard published in the *Journal of the Rhode Island Institute of Instruction*, which he edited. While none of the Little Compton examples was published in this periodical, they are similar to the one-room rural types that Barnard advocated. Four remain, and the least altered and most like the Barnard/Tefft designs is the Number 8 Schoolhouse on the Commons. These schools served the town until the late 1920s, when the school system consolidated the school districts and built one school for the whole town, the Josephine Wilbour School on the Commons.

CIVIC ARCHITECTURE

The public architecture of Little Compton is simple. Like that of most rural New England towns, it is rooted in local traditions, yet it participates in significant and well documented national trends in American architecture. The town's most important and conspicuous buildings are architecturally remarkable because they combine the local time-honored building methods and forms with the symbolism inherent in the revivalist modes employed through the nineteenth century.

Little Compton's civic development in the 1830s and 1840s coincided with a national diffusion of ancient Greek architectural forms. The most elaborate and sophisticated of these were re-creations and adaptations of Greek temples as

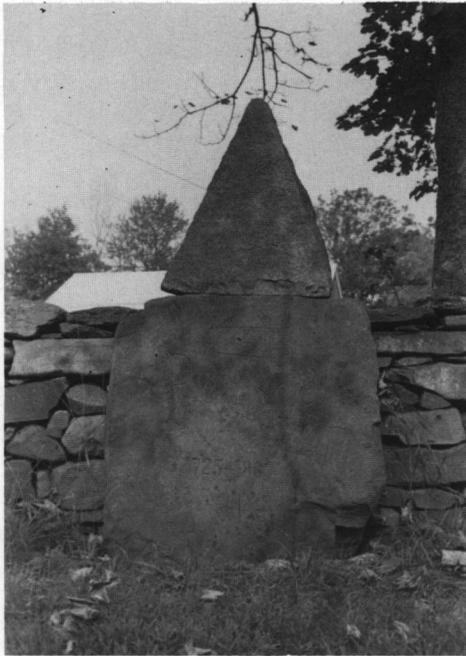


Figure 7. Peaked Top School Marker (late 19th century). Located at the corner of West Main and Swamp Roads, it marks the school's original location.

Figure 8. Peaked Top School (20th century), on the grounds of Wilbor House, 548 West Main Road. A recreation of the building originally located at the corner of West Main and Swamp Roads.



Figure 9. Number 8 Schoolhouse (ca. 1845), 38 Commons.

houses, churches, and governmental buildings. Designs for these buildings were published by architects and builders like Asher Benjamin and Minard Lafever in pattern books, which enjoyed a wide distribution among carpenters across the country. Books like these had informed American architecture since the mid-eighteenth century: they transmitted to local craftsmen not only the latest styles and forms but also the technical means of achieving them. Little Compton builders could have come to know the Greek Revival both from these pattern books and from the sophisticated examples designed by Russell Warren and James Bucklin and then rising in Providence, Bristol, and nearby Fall River.

The designs for the new Congregational and Methodist Churches and the district schoolhouses approached the Greek Revival simply and abstractly. The Methodist Church most nearly simulated Greek temple form. It was placed gable end to the street with the gable treated as a pediment above a broad entablature, and the pilaster strips across the front and at the corners referred to Greek temples' columned porches. The high basement and full-width front steps recall the prominent siting of Greek temples. The Number 8 Schoolhouse is simple, with no overtly Greek detail, but achieves a modest monumentality through its scale and strong geometry. Both churches have been modified: the Congregational Church by raising and remodeling of the tower and spire and the Methodist Church by the removal of its tower, broad front steps, and pilastrade on the facade.

In rural vernacular American architecture, the Greek Revival effected changes of scale and detail but little altered traditional building forms or methods. Of the successive waves of styles and forms that swept over the country during the nineteenth century, this was the most easily absorbed by tradition-bound craftsmen. Its most lasting effect was the introduction of monumentality through an increased breadth of scale. After the Greek Revival had long since run its course, this lesson of monumentality lingered in the local building tradition. Both the Town Hall and the Odd Fellows Hall in Adamsville, built around 1880, have a Greek Revivalist monumentality and simplicity of form, but not the style itself.

The Greek Revival also carried associational values. Its overt reference to the birthplace of democracy appealed to American sensibilities. Certainly its equal application to public buildings, churches, and houses suggests a uniform architectural vision that looks toward a national style. Never again in American architectural history would such uniformity of style among building types obtain.

The concept of symbolism in architecture introduced by the Greek Revival, however, remained important. The close relationship between style and meaning in American architecture from the mid-nineteenth through the mid-twentieth century made possible a wide variety of forms and styles, each one appropriate for one or more building types. This phenomenon is clear in the town's later public buildings.

Mediaeval forms and detailing became associated with ecclesiastical buildings in the mid-nineteenth century, and architects made use of both the round-arch style of the Romanesque and the pointed-arch style of the Gothic—as well as combinations of the two into generically medieval revival buildings. By the 1870s, both of the principal Protestant denominations in Little Compton chose to realize the equivalence between medieval forms and religious use in their churches. The Methodists abandoned their Greek temple and built an imposing medieval-inspired church at the west end of the common: its asymmetrical facade with tall, pointed spire and its east-facing orientation were clearly Gothic, and the use of round-arch windows drew on the Romanesque. The Methodist Church was damaged in the 1944 hurricane and subsequently demolished. The Congregationalists remodeled their Greek temple, raising it on a high basement and adding a

large mediievalizing, spire-capped narthex: its emphatic verticality and Tudor-arch entrance are Gothic, and the round-arch fenestration is Romanesque. The highly personal vision of the Romanesque that H. H. Richardson developed and used for public buildings in the 1870s and early 1880s had a wide, profound influence, and the Richardsonian Romanesque became a model for public buildings nationwide through the first decade of the twentieth century. A vernacular interpretation of this mode appears in Little Compton's Grange of 1902, where the characteristically Richardsonian asymmetry, horizontality of massing, and use of banded windows and round-arch entrance are combined with the wood-frame construction and shingle cladding that dominated local building here in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

DOMESTIC ARCHITECTURE

Little Compton's situation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as an isolated, rural, agrarian town influenced its domestic architecture. Unlike public buildings, domestic design maintained much more of its vernacular quality: the local forms established in the eighteenth century remained in use well into the nineteenth, and the domestic interpretations of nineteenth-century trends were simple adaptations, a situation that continued until the later nineteenth century when large, stylish houses were first built for summer residents.

The predominant Little Compton house form of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is the rectangular-plan, one-and-a-half- or two-and-a-half-story house with a gable roof and large center chimney, paired interior chimneys, or outside-wall chimneys. In the eighteenth century, these were usually built without a rear ell, but by the early nineteenth century, kitchen ells were incorporated into the design or added to older houses. The facade of an early house was the principal object of design efforts. Usually divided into four or five more or less equal bays, it was typically organized around a center or slightly off-center entrance. Less common was the three-bay-facade house, with the entrance either at the center or to one end of the facade. The entrances of early houses had neither side lights or transom lights and simple frames. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the entrance was often framed with a pedimented surround with a five-light transom window over the door. Toward the end of the century, semicircular fanlights were used in place of transom lights. Narrow sidelights flanking the door were used beginning in the early nineteenth century.

Interior organization of space followed several schemes. The earliest of these was a five-room plan organized around the center chimney. It allowed a small front hall with three-run staircase in front of the chimney, two front rooms with fireplaces, a large room with fireplace at rear center, and two small rooms flanking the rear center room, which usually served as the kitchen. This plan was usually repeated on the second story. A variation on this scheme included a center hall, which either occupied the space of the small front hall and the center chimney of the five-room plan or penetrated the full depth of the house and allowed for four rooms, one at each corner of the rectangular plan.

Interior trim was usually simple and limited to the areas around the fireplace. This area was paneled from floor to ceiling in the eighteenth century, earlier with heavy bolection molding and later with the flatter beveled paneling. Mantel shelves did not come into common use until the end of the eighteenth century, but overmantel cupboards were installed in Little Compton houses in the first half of the century. Mantelpieces became common just around 1800, and these were frequently embellished with moldings and carving; the decorative treatment of mantels and other embellished trim in early houses at the hands of craftsmen



Figure 10. United Congregational Church (1832, 1871, 1974, 1986), 1 Commons. The view to the north shows the building undergoing extensive restoration, in 1974.



Figure 11. Little Compton Grange Hall (1902), 34 Commons.

Figure 12. Briggs House
(early/mid 18th century), 100
Shaw Road.



Figure 13. Pardon Brownell
House (late 18th century), 5
Shaw Road.



Figure 14. John Hunt House
(mid-/late 18th century), 228
West Main Road.



*Figure 15. David White House
(ca. 1840?), 311 West Main
Road.*



*Figure 16. Mrs. F. Wilbour's
House (ca. 1860?), 4 Commons.*



*Figure 17. Peckham-Brownell
House (ca. 1882?), 86 Willow
Avenue.*



establishes their distinctly local quality. Typical examples of the eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Little Compton house include the Briggs House at 100 Shaw Road, the Brownell House at 5 Shaw Road, the Hunt House at 228 West Main Road, and the Manchester-Leary House (1842-43) at 14 Westport Harbor Road. Built over a period of a hundred years, these houses illustrate the persistence of form in Little Compton's vernacular architecture.

Little Compton's building tradition was well established when the numerous revivals of historic styles introduced a wide variety of forms and details to American architecture beginning in the 1820s. While Greek temples, Italian villas, French chateaus, and Gothic castles rose elsewhere across the country, Little Compton domestic architecture changed principally with the introduction of new proportions and details. The basic exterior forms and the interior arrangement of rooms remained largely unchanged.

Several Little Compton houses illustrate the diffusion of easily adapted architectural innovations grafted onto standard forms. The David White House (ca. 1840?), 311 West Main Road, incorporates a broad entablature and wide pilaster strips of the Greek Revival on both the body of the house and the entrance enframing; otherwise, the main block of the house follows the five-bay-facade, center-entrance, paired-interior-chimney format in use since the eighteenth century. Mrs. F. Wilbour's House (ca. 1860?), 4 Commons, has the same form, but bracketed Italianate trim over the windows and at the cornice. The Peckham-Brownell House (ca. 1882), 86 Willow Avenue, uses the same basic form as the other two, but has Gothic-derived detail: false trusswork and pierced bargeboards in the gable ends, elaborate gable roof, medievalizing posts at the principal entrance, and an oriel over the front door. The Peckham-Brownell House incorporates up-to-date detail and obscures the vernacular form of the house with more sophistication than the earlier houses, perhaps an indication of a growing desire of Little Compton homeowners to build more stylish houses and of the ability of Little Compton craftsmen to accommodate those desires.

IMMIGRATION

Until the middle years of the nineteenth century, Rhode Island and Little Compton in particular were overwhelmingly Yankee in ethnic composition. Successive waves of immigrants to Rhode Island transformed its ethnic composition beginning in the 1840s. While this change was most profound in the state's urban areas and in the mill villages of the Blackstone and Pawtuxet Valleys, it also occurred in rural areas on a lesser scale. Immigration to Little Compton somewhat parallels that for the state in general, but the wide range of ethnic groups that settled in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Rhode Island does not appear here. Only two groups arrived in significant numbers, the Irish and the Portuguese; Little Compton did not attract the Italians, the French Canadians, or the eastern Europeans who settled in large numbers elsewhere.

In Little Compton, the percentage of foreign-born individuals remained between four and seven percent, until the last decade of the nineteenth century, when it reached nearly fifteen percent; the state as a whole then counted more thirty-nine percent foreign born. The effects of immigration on Little Compton's physical character are scarce; the number of immigrants was small, and there are no groups of tenements, workers' cottages, tenant farmhouses, or other identifiable structures traditionally associated with immigrants.

Immigration to Little Compton occurred slowly and modestly. In 1850, the first year that foreign born were recorded, Little Compton counted fourteen immi-

grants: ten from Ireland, two from England, and one each from Germany and Portugal. Eight of the fourteen were field hands or servants who boarded with the families who employed them. During the 1860s, nearly two-thirds of the fifty or sixty foreign born were Irish, followed by three to five each from Portugal, Scotland, England, and Canada. In the 1870s and early 1880s, the sixty to eighty foreign born included approximately thirty-seven percent Irish, twenty-five percent Portuguese or Azorean, and approximately twenty-five percent English or Scot. By 1900, however, Little Compton counted 162 foreign born, of them sixty percent Portuguese, twenty percent English or Scot, and less than ten percent Irish.

Like long-time resident families of Little Compton, Irish immigrants performed traditional tasks, rather than filling newly created positions in the work force, as occurred in industrializing areas. The men worked the land for Yankee farmers or—occasionally—on farms they owned or rented. The women cleaned and cooked for Yankee families. A number of families had both a farm hand and a cook/housekeeper living on their farms and may well have employed more who lived off the farm—especially on larger farms toward the end of the nineteenth century when commercial agriculture became more significant. Few of the Irish immigrants stayed in Little Compton for any length of time, especially the hired hands who boarded with their employers.

The Portuguese were the only other nineteenth-century immigrant group to come to Little Compton in significant numbers. Arriving by the late 1870s from both the mainland and the Azores, they worked almost exclusively as farm hands. According to census data, they remained, unlike the Irish before them. By the early twentieth century, they had begun to establish themselves by acquiring property and continuing to farm—not as farm hands but as proprietors.

Further, the Portuguese community led the way to the formation of the town's first Roman Catholic Church, St. Catherine of Siena, established in 1910. The transient Irish, also predominantly Roman Catholic, never achieved a sufficiently large permanent population to establish a local church. Previously, the few Roman Catholics in Little Compton attended services celebrated by visiting priests in private houses or the Grange Hall, or traveled to Tiverton, Fall River, or New Bedford for services. The church, built on land given by the Pinheiro family, remained a mission until given parish status in 1930.

The gradual assimilation of immigrants into the existing Yankee community of Little Compton parallels other changes to the town in the nineteenth century. It occurred slowly and with little apparent change to the town's physical character. The phenomenon of immigration, which so dramatically changed the physical character of most of Rhode Island, was gently experienced in Little Compton.

"NOTHING OCCURRED OF ANY GREAT AMOUNT DURING THE DAY."²²

The reflection of Frances Gifford in her diary entry for 20 April 1860 abstracts and symbolizes the life of rural Little Compton as a thriving, well-ordered, and close-knit agricultural community. Daily life in Little Compton during the eighteenth and much of the nineteenth century was not dramatic or rapidly changing, but nevertheless filled with activity. The diaries of Frances Gifford in the 1860s and of Sarah Soule Wilbour in the 1880s reveal lives filled with household chores, visiting among friends, seasonal repairs to farm houses and outbuildings, church attendance, and reports of farm production and local politics. The tone of both diaries is optimistic and suggests that both authors, despite differences in age and wealth, shared a similar sense of well being with their own and their friends' and neighbors' fortunes in life. The tranquil agricultural community suggested by Miss Gifford and Mrs. Wilbour probably depicts reality faithfully—and it certainly became an ideal for succeeding generations of Little Compton residents, especially as recorded by journalist David Patton in his evocative articles in the *Providence Journal* during the first half of the twentieth century.

²²Entry from the diary of Frances Gifford, Friday, 20 April 1860, quoted in Wilbour, *Notes on Little Compton*, p. 64.

SUMMER COLONY PATINA

"That Charm of Remoteness"

By the middle years of the nineteenth century, when Little Compton had changed slightly and slowly, urban centers, like nearby Providence and Fall River, were transforming into dense commercial and industrial centers of wealth. As cities grew ever larger during the nineteenth century, increasing numbers of their residents sought retreat from urban life and went to parks, to the country, to the seashore. In summer, they escaped the cities in several ways: those who could afford them bought or built country houses in suburban or rural settings; others sojourned in resort hotels or roomed and boarded with rural families; and others took advantage of newly developed modes of public transportation to make day excursions for picnics or shore dinners. The destinations for these excursions were generally places that least resembled city conditions.

Little Compton's beautiful, tranquil, and isolated setting attracted summer visitors as early as the 1850s. In 1869, Providence poet Sarah Helen Whitman recalled her visit to Little Compton:

How cool and refreshing to a dweller in the sultry city were
the vaporous winds that blew over the new-mown meadows
and across the wild rose hedges that bordered the roadside.
How delicious the breath of the sweet briar that floated in
at night through the open window!²³

Indeed, it was the isolation and slow pace of Little Compton that attracted summer residents. Mrs. Whitman noted

...people still go to Seaconnet, though, it must be confessed,
that they go there under difficulties. To journey by steam-
boat and stage from Providence to Little Compton takes
more time than it does to go by railroad to New York. Yet
these very difficulties lend to the locality that charm of
remoteness from the thronged thoroughfares of travel...²⁴

The summer residents, drawn to and appreciative of Little Compton's isolated and charming environment, nevertheless initiated changes to the town's physical character that would continue into well the twentieth century. Sarah Wilbour noted as early as 1886,

Compton seems to have increasing attractions for Providence
people. I don't think it adds to our happiness to have so
many city ways and fashions brought among us.²⁵

The town's emergence as a place to spend the summer did not, however, directly conflict with established patterns of land use. The open, picturesque landscape—with stonewall-bounded fields and cattle grazing serenely in pastures and

²³Sarah Helen Whitman, cited in Wilbour, *Notes*, p. 252.

²⁴Sarah Helen Whitman, cited in Wilbour, *Notes*, p.251.

²⁵Wilbour; *op. cit.*, p. 97.

occasional glimpses of the bay and sea beyond—still remains one of the town's chief attractions and has long been largely responsible for enticing the summer population. Fortunately, the new layer of development was visually compatible with the existing rural, agricultural landscape and introduced new architectural forms and attitudes to the established vernacular.

The changes imposed on Little Compton by summer visitors were directly related to the kinds of visitors it attracted. Short-term visitors encouraged the development of hotels and dinner halls—most now gone—that sprang up around Sakonnet Point, while summer residents lived in houses bought or built throughout the community—not concentrated in one or two locations. Unlike Newport or Narragansett, Little Compton never developed into a resort with a hierarchical routine or strong geographic focus to its summer activities.

Few traces remain of Little Compton's earliest summer activity. The large Seaconnet House, located at the intersection of Warren's Point and Sakonnet Roads, was in operation by the middle of the nineteenth century. By the late nineteenth century, the Sakonnet Steamboat Corporation's liners, the steamers "Queen City" and "Awashonks" made daily round trips during the warmer months from Providence to Sakonnet Point. The increased traffic to and from Sakonnet Point during these years was well served by the Sakonnet Point Lighthouse, erected in 1883-84. The company also operated the shore dinner hall located at Sakonnet Point and in 1887 built the ample Sakonnet Inn, a two-and-a-half-story shingled structure wrapped with a wide porch. The Seaconnet House has long been demolished, and all the old buildings at Sakonnet Point were destroyed by hurricanes in the twentieth century.

Summer residents made a far more sweeping impact on the town. Like other Rhode Island seaside summer spots—Newport, Jamestown, Watch Hill, Narragansett—Little Compton's shore drew landlocked out-of-state residents. Many of its summer residents, however, lived in Providence, New Bedford, or Fall River. Several summer families were descendants of Little Compton families. Early summer residents either boarded or rented existing farmhouses, but construction of summer houses had begun by the 1880s. The first identifiable summer houses were not constructed adjacent to one another, but were located to exploit the town's pastoral charm, fine vistas, or proximity to the water.

REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT

The earliest group of summer houses, erected on Warren's Point, were built by families from New York and the Midwest. The first of these, the Alden House (ca. 1886) at 10 Atlantic Avenue, was built on land divided from the Kempton Farm, which included much of the land at Warren's Point. By deed restriction, purchasers of the property here were guaranteed overland access to Warren's Point Beach and prohibited from selling alcoholic beverages; such restrictions ensured the creation of a quiet, residential summer colony. The Aldens encouraged their friends and family to join them at Warren's Point, and by 1915 a number of large shingled houses overlooked the Atlantic Ocean from this spot.

The informal development of Warren's Point as a summer colony beginning in the late 1880s encouraged the first and largest of Little Compton's speculative real estate development schemes. Largely unrealized, Henry T. Sisson's "Seaconnet Park" of 1895 extended east from the Sakonnet River to beyond Long Pond and north from the Atlantic Ocean to beyond Sakonnet Point Road. It included several hundred lots arranged in a grid around Long Pond and Round Pond, re-named "Lake Louise" and "Lake May." Sisson too imposed restrictions on the

deeds to his development. Within one year, buyers were required to erect a "private family" dwelling costing not less than \$3,000 and built more than fifteen feet from any road. They were prohibited from engaging in manufacturing or public trading, selling liquor, or building barns, privies, outbuildings, fences, bowling alleys, "flying horses," merry-go-rounds, or public amusements. Boat houses and bathhouses on ocean and pond shores were allowed only by permission of the Board of Managers, and "lewdness, prostitution, and illegal gaming"²⁶ were strictly prohibited. Sisson's restrictions reveal both an awareness that Little Compton had special appeal as a summer spot and a concerted attempt to avoid here, near the shore-dinner hall at Sakonnet Point, the meretricious atmosphere associated with day-trip seaside developments. Only a few houses were built at first—and these principally in the second and third decades of the twentieth century.

Later summer colonies were more successful. Both Bailey's Ledge and Taylor's Lane South were less restrictive and smaller in scale than Seaconnet Park. Importantly, Little Compton summer colony development, which was undertaken by newly arrived investors as well as long-time town residents, was never carried out on a large scale, perhaps a reaction to the ambitious and unfortunate Seaconnet Park.

Bailey's Ledge was developed in the 1910s and 1920s by Clinton Rossiter and Henry W. Goodrich, who bought the John Bailey Farm on Sakonnet Point Road in 1912. This parcel is on a bluff overlooking the Sakonnet River to the west and surrounded by the Sakonnet Golf Club. The developers of the twenty-odd parcel plat required that purchasers of land here build no more than one single dwelling per lot, with any necessary outbuildings, and that the house cost at least \$5,000. This area developed steadily through the 1920s and 1930s with substantial summer houses.

Taylor's Lane South was developed on land long owned by the Wilbour family. In 1918, Philip Wilbour sold a parcel of this land, with no deed restrictions, to Knight Richmond, who built a summer house there. By the mid-1920s, Wilbour had recognized the value of his land overlooking the Sakonnet River: in the summer of 1926, he engaged Providence engineer O. Perry Sarle to draw up lots along a private lane that extended south from the west end of Taylor's Lane and he offered them for sale, requiring the purchasers to erect houses costing at least \$5,000. A dozen large houses were standing here by 1940.

SUMMER ARCHITECTURE

Little Compton's summer residents introduced a formally planned, self-conscious aesthetic order to the town's physical character. They brought with them an appreciation of contemporary fashions in architecture and landscape and incorporated these ideas into their vacation residences. Until the late nineteenth century, Little Compton residential architecture had responded far more to tradition and need than to a defined aesthetic order.

The new aesthetic vision was by no means at odds with the existing rural landscape and architecture, for late nineteenth-century residential architecture drew heavily on the forms and imagery of colonial New England: the rambling farmhouse, expanded over time, provided a model for picturesque massing, and

²⁶All quotations regarding deed restrictions in Seaconnet Park are found in Little Compton Land Records, Book 18, Page 274.



*Figure 18. Charles L. Alden
House (ca. 1886), 10 Atlantic
Avenue.*



*Figure 19. Adeline E. H. Slicer
House (1886-87), 581 West
Main Road, Stone, Carpenter &
Willson, architects.*

these richly textured buildings' weathered wooden shingles, massive stone and brick chimneys, and small-paned windows, were often imitated. The modest gardens, indigenous plants, and stone walls provided a simple and suitable backdrop for the new summer houses. The beginnings of Little Compton's days as a summer place coincided with the first stirrings of interest in the country's colonial past, a cultural and aesthetic yearning that has continued with varying intensity ever since.

What distinguishes summer residential architecture from vernacular dwellings are changes in building program, introduction of non-local forms and plans, and—perhaps most important—conscious design, often by an architect. Summer houses looked different because they were different: they were designed not to house a working farm family year round, but to provide a place of leisure for family, guests, and sometimes servants only during the warm summer months. This difference encouraged increased attention to the house's appearance and variety in forms and plans. The plans of summer houses reflected this change in function: they emphasized common sitting rooms and bedrooms, and the buildings themselves were oriented to their gardens and the views beyond by means of porches and large windows. The introduction of a conscious design process to the construction of houses broadened the range of forms that houses could take. It is important to note that the vernacular forms were not replaced—indeed, they continue to thrive today—but they became another—and often preferred—choice. The consciousness of the design of summer houses would play an important role in the look of the town's individual houses as well as the development of a strong Little Compton aesthetic.

The earliest Little Compton summer houses were commodious shingled structures. The Alden, Clough, and Winter Houses at Warren's Point and the Slicer House on West Main Road are two-, and two-and-a-half-story dwellings with wide porches that provide a transition between indoor and outdoor living, several interconnected sitting and dining rooms on the first story, and a number of upstairs bedrooms. The latter were necessary both for the large families and the numerous guests that descended on the summer families: the Winters once hosted twenty-six children at their house, aptly named "Gatherem."

The Slicer House (ca. 1886) is one of the most distinctive of the early summer houses, and its construction informed later trends. The frontispiece of the house is an old windmill; moved to the site for the construction of this house, it is perhaps the town's only surviving example. Attached to the shingled house that sweeps around it, the windmill appears as a turret, similar to those incorporated into the designs of entirely new houses in the 1880s. The reuse of an old agricultural structure later became a minor theme in twentieth-century Little Compton building, with barns, chicken coops, and corn cribs all pressed into residential service.

Late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Little Compton summer houses embodied two themes in American architecture, the colonial and the picturesque. The use of our country's earliest buildings as design sources became increasingly common after the Centennial Exposition in 1876, while the interest in quaint, charming, picturesque effects has a long history in English and American architecture, particularly for country houses. The two concepts are somewhat linked, but their interpretation varies over time.

These concepts guided both the construction of new houses and the remodeling of old houses and farm buildings into country retreats. The allusions to colonial forms and materials that were first made by architects in the 1880s vary considerably from the those used in academic Georgian models in favor around the turn of the century or in the vernacular revival used in the 1920s and 1930s. And

the application of picturesque effect ranges from controlled informality in the 1880s to studiously fashioned, picture-book quaintness during the 1920s and 1930s. In new construction, these contrasts are well illustrated by the Winter House on Warren's Point, the Dora Wilbour Patten House on West Main Road, and the Daniel Drake-Smith House on Taylor's Lane South. Similarly, remodelings of the Simmons-Manchester House on Sakonnet Point Road and the Burgess-Saloman House on West Main Road show changing attitudes toward the colonial and the picturesque.

The Winter House (ca. 1905), designed by Providence architects Stone, Carpenter & Willson, is a large, two-and-a-half-story, shingled house masquerading as a quaint colonial cottage. Culminating the late nineteenth-century shingled mode, the design relies heavily on an eclectic selection, adaptation, and combination of a variety of colonial forms. The house's simple, rectangular-plan, gable-roof form, covered entirely with shingles, recalls that of the eighteenth-century. The broad, ocean-facing wraparound porch; the two levels of dormers; and the monumental horizontality of the composition place the house well within the mainstream of turn-of-the-century summer houses. The house's picturesque quality is reinforced by the play of shadow and light across the textured wood shingles covering all wall and roof surfaces and more broadly sketched in the prominent dormers and the open porch enclosed within the mass of the house.

The Patten House (1908-09) fully demonstrates the academic interest in eighteenth-century houses current in the early twentieth century. Clad entirely in painted clapboard, its main block is symmetrically massed and features flanking one-story porches on each end, one open and one glazed. The facade has a projecting, pedimented entrance pavilion at the center, fronted by a one-story entrance porch. Detail, like form, is based on elaborate eighteenth-century exemplars, but the house enjoys the breadth of scale typical of turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival houses. Its monumentality and elaborateness are characteristically somewhat at odds with the implicitly picturesque "colonialness" of its image.

The late nineteenth-century remodeling of the pre-1850 Valentine Simmons House capitalized on the symmetry of the facade and use of classicizing elements—like the Doric columns on the front porch—and added small-paned-window sash, turned balusters, fanlight windows, and an octagonal cupola at the crest of the roof. All of the elements added in this remodeling were touchstones of the colonial around the turn of the century and are typically exaggerated here.

The Drake-Smith House (1928-29), designed by Providence architect Edwin Emory Cull, is, like the Winter and Patten Houses, a large house with a complex program. Unlike the earlier houses, which celebrate their elaborate plans in monumentality of mass, the Drake-Smith House, built in one campaign, seemingly disguises the program by enclosing the many rooms in a low, story-and-a-half mass, strung out across the ground like the rambling farmhouses that developed over centuries. The Little Compton vernacular is the basis for the form of this house, and it is skillfully used here as a conscious choice.

The Burgess-Saloman House incorporates a small, nineteenth-century farmhouse at the north end of the building and extensive additions to the south from the 1920s. The simply detailed, shingled forms hark back to local exemplars, but the shaded terrace reached by French doors is a pretty, picturesque touch.

The epitome of picturesque country houses was reached in the elaborate storybook-like houses inspired by rural French and English farm houses and built primarily between the first and second world wars. Typical of these is the Amy Phillips House (1941-42) on Old Main Road, probably designed by Providence

Figure 20. Simmons-Manchester House (mid-19th century, ca. 1898), 106 Sakonnet Point Road.



Figure 21. Dora Wilbour Patten House (1908-09), 541 West Main Road.



Figure 22. "Gatherem," the Edwin W. Winter House (ca. 1905), 24 Grinnell Road, Stone, Carpenter & Willson, architects.



Figure 23. Amy Phillips House (1941-42), 10 Old West Main Road, Albert Harkness (?), architect.



Figure 24. Daniel Drake-Smith House (1928-29), 23 Taylor's Lane South, Edwin Emory Cull, architect.



Figure 25. Burgess-Saloman House (mid-19th century, 1920s), 500 West Main Road.



*Figure 26. S. Newell Smith
Houses (ca. 1920) 135 and 139
Sakonnet Point Road.*



*Figure 27. Arthur Ruggles
House (1929-30), 54 Bailey's
Ledge, Royal Barry Wills (?),
architect.*



architect Albert Harkness. This rambling, shingled house, organized around a round-plan stone entrance tower with a peaked roof, is embellished with round-head doors and casement windows and exaggeratedly small-paned sash windows with prominent shutters.

These houses are among the largest, most elaborate of their types in Little Compton and most fully demonstrate the extent of variety among late nineteenth-and early twentieth-century summer houses. Many more smaller, equally fine examples exist in the town. There are bungalows, like the S. Newell Smith House (1915), 135 Sakonnet Point Road, that follow in the shingled tradition of the Winter House. The Arthur Ruggles House (1929-30), 54 Bailey's Ledge, looks to the same academic forms of the Colonial Revival found in the Patten House. The charming, picturesque qualities of the colonial found in the Drake-Smith and Burgess-Saloman House inform the Edward S. Cole House (1929) at 77B Taylor's Lane.

The development of Little Compton as a summer place between the 1880s and the second world war added an important new building type to the town. The summer houses built here during these years reflect national architectural trends as they were particularly adapted to the specific needs of Little Compton's summer residents. Unlike those built across the bay in Newport, they were never elaborate or formal, and all reflect a strong sense of place in their allusions to the town's past or its rural character. While their generally unpretentious quality may suggest a lack of concern with design, careful study of these buildings reveals how superbly well planned they are to serve a low-key, informal summer population.

A NEW ENGLAND ICON

By the early twentieth century, Little Compton had begun to develop a strong sense of its history and the importance of considering its historical legacy as a guide to its future development. Revering the past was not uncommon in the early twentieth century: communities as varied as Providence and Foster celebrated "Old Home Week" during the century's first decade. In Little Compton, awareness of history developed early and remained strong as a force in the town's development.

Among the earliest signs of a local sense of history are the actions of Sarah Soule Wilbour in the early 1880s. Mrs. Wilbour was instrumental in the construction of the monument to Elizabeth Pabodie daughter of John and Priscilla Alden, located at the Commons burial ground. In June of 1882, she noted in her diary

We went to see the monument put up yesterday... It is a great satisfaction to me to know that the thing is done. I have had it on my mind 35 years. I started a subscription for the purpose in 1847 but was not able to awaken much interest in the subject but let it drop. Two years ago I moved again with better success.²⁷

²⁷Wilbour, *op. cit.*, pp.93-94.

Mrs. Wilbour was also responsible for the construction of the marker commemorating the Peaked Top School at the corner of Swamp and West Main Roads.

The consideration of the town's physical character as it had developed over nearly two hundred and fifty years acquired considerable prominence in 1913 with the establishment of the Village Improvement Society. The organization perceived a need within the town:

...the town is very much alive and it was to help it to develop along the lines so carefully drawn by the first wise settlers that it was recently proposed to form a village improvement society...to stimulate the people...above all to furnish such opportunities for their children as should prevent them from rushing cityward as soon as the apron-strings were broken.²⁸

These sentiments suggest a realization on the part of local citizens that the constant decline in population could well be attributed to the lack of activities and educational opportunities. The society circulated a list of suggested needed improvements that ranged from schools, roads, library, trees, through agricultural aids to Boy Scouts, Campfire Girls, and a wide variety of amusements. The town's response was overwhelming: residents seemed to want every item on the list. Perhaps even more remarkable was their willingness and ability to organize and support the desired improvements. In 1915, the Brownell House at 1 Meetinghouse Lane was offered to the town to house the Village Improvement Society, and it has since remained a civic center. Pardon Brownell offered a lot on the Commons for the construction of a home for the Little Compton Free Public Library, established in 1879. Upon his death in 1921, he provided a bequest to pay for the construction of the library. The library and a new school, to replace the ones built in the mid-1840s, were direct products of the recommendations of the Village Improvement Society.

Both the library and the school were built in 1929. A conscious attempt was made to harmonize these new buildings with the town's setting:

it is hoped that the [library] will be planned on lines in keeping with the colonial history of the village and that the new school house, which must soon follow, shall have as harmonious a style of architecture.²⁹

The Brownell Library, designed by architect Charles G. Loring, who specialized in small-town libraries, is domestic in appearance: it is a one-and-a-half-story brick structure with a five-bay facade and center entrance within a projecting pedimented pavilion. The structure, built of common brick for fire prevention, was originally painted white, as the architect noted, "to match the other buildings on the village green."³⁰ The Josephine Wilbour School is larger in size and scale than the library, but its low hip roof, symmetrical massing, and cognately colonial detailing—the pedimented entrance porch and the cupola on the roof—link it to the village's architectural heritage.

²⁸ Georgiana Bowen Withington, "Forming a Village Improvement Society," *House Beautiful* 36(1914), p. 68.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ Charles G. Loring, "The Small Public Library," *Architectural Record* (July 1932), p. 63.

Figure 28. Elizabeth Pabodie Monument (1882), The Commons.



Figure 29. Brownell House (18th century, 1823), 1 Meetinghouse Lane.



Figure 30. Brownell Library (1929, 1961-63), 44 Commons, Charles G. Loring, architect. Illustration from Architectural Record, July 1932.



Fred Stiff

Brownell Memorial Library at Little Compton, Rhode Island. Outside walls are of common brick painted white to match the other buildings on the village green. The roof is covered with slate; the trim is wood, the gutter and downspouts copper. Charles G. Loring, architect.

Little Compton residents—both summer and year-round—became increasingly aware of and involved in the town's history and historical importance. The Little Compton Historical Society was established in 1937: it acquired the Wilbour House in 1955 and restored it carefully over the succeeding years and has actively promoted understanding of the town's history through lectures and publications. The same year that the historical society was established, Elizabeth Mason Lloyd gave the Wilbour Woods to the town. This large parcel of land, assembled in the nineteenth century by Isaac Wilbour, had long enjoyed associations with the town's pre-historic settlement and was appreciated as a touchstone to the period of European contact with the Indians.

Perhaps the most telling recognition of Little Compton's value as a historic town as well as the breadth of that recognition was the inclusion of a number of photographs of the town's old buildings in Samuel Chamberlain's *Six New England Villages*, published in 1948. This volume celebrated the quaint, picturesque charm of Hancock, New Hampshire; Litchfield, Connecticut; Old Bennington, Vermont; Deerfield, Massachusetts; Wiscasset, Maine; and Little Compton. Clearly, in Rhode Island, Little Compton had no peer in presenting and preserving what was popularly perceived as a typical New England village.

MID-TWENTIETH CENTURY

Little Compton's physical development was evolutionary from its early years to the eve of World War II. Even with the influx of summer residents and visitors after the middle years of the nineteenth century, the town changed remarkably little. Farms, houses, churches, bathhouses, a hotel or restaurant or two, and a handful of public buildings were all that existed here, and they coexisted amicably among themselves and within the landscape. The presence of a strong building tradition, enriched by the new fashions and tastes introduced by the summer population, was vital in the creation of this cohesive whole. This gentle equilibrium was somewhat disturbed by several external events and forces beginning in the late 1930s.

The hurricane of 21 September 1938 swept Sakonnet Point clean of all its buildings: the Sakonnet Inn, the Fo'c's'le restaurant, the fish markets, shore dinner halls, and the stores that established this area as a seaside village. This natural catastrophe forever changed the quality of the area and removed the evidence of the Point's long and important role in the town's summer life. The decision not to rebuild much of this—save for the restaurant and the fishing-related structures—suggests that the day-excursion and hotel phase of the Point's summer life was over.

The second world war, unlike the first, had a significant physical effect on Little Compton. In 1940, the United States government purchased three parcels of land in the south end of town for military fortifications. Known collectively as Fort Church, in honor of settler and King Philip's War hero Benjamin Church, these three parcels were located on both sides of West Main Road south of Swamp Road. Each of the three sections, located on high ground, was armed with eight- or sixteen-inch guns and prepared to defend the coastline in the event of an air attack by hostile forces. These buildings were disguised as farm complexes to avoid detection from the air. Occupied throughout the war, the complex never played an active role in the country's defence—much like the series of watch houses established along the Sakonnet River during the Revolution and the War of 1812. In the late 1940s, the land reverted to private ownership, and portions of it have been developed for seasonal residential use.

The most striking change to the town's built environment has been effected by the introduction of modernist architecture and tract development. Both have occurred on a limited basis and in relative isolation.

Modernist architecture appeared here just before World War II. The Thomas Marvell House (1940) on Warren's Point Road was designed by Marvel himself, who had just completed work at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. This flushboard-covered, shed-roofed house, consisting of several pavilions, was a startling new presence: both its forms and its light color broke considerably with the picturesque, rambling, singled structures that nestled comfortably into the landscape.

After World War II, other modernist houses appeared in Little Compton. Albert Harkness designed several modern houses on Warren's Point Road: both the Jenkes and Nightingale Houses (1949 and 1950), unlike the Marvel House, incorporate less dramatic forms and more traditional materials. The progressive nature of their designs reflects mainstream contemporary architectural trends as well as Harkness's talent at handling both academic and modernist concepts. Most of the modernist houses in Little Compton are little seen because of their isolated settings off the town's main roads, perhaps a reaction to the prominently sited Marvel House.

Figure 31. Thomas Marvell House (1940), 65 Warren's Point Road, Thomas Marvell, architect.

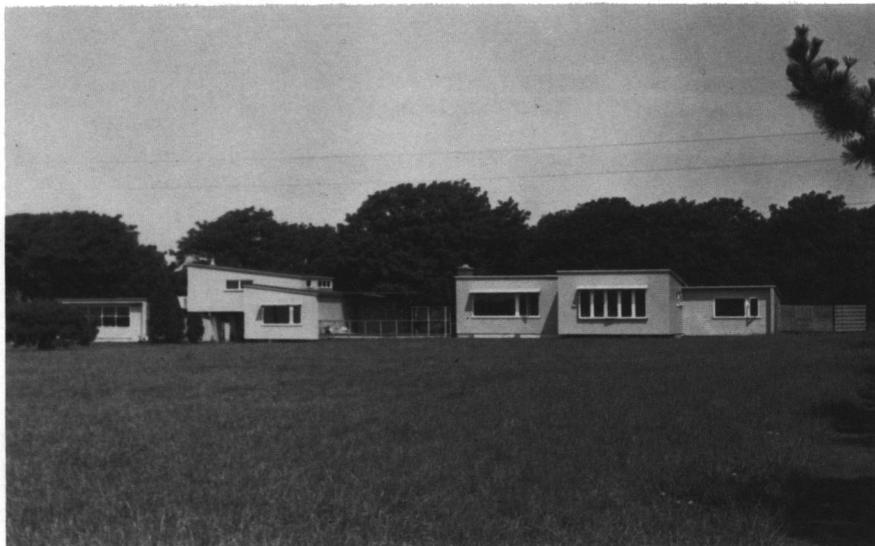


Figure 32. Almet Jenks House (1949), 64 Warren's Point Road, Albert Harkness, architect. Illustration of the house soon after completion. Harkness Collection, Rhode Island Historical Society.



Figure 33. William G. Nightingale House (1950), 49 Warren's Point Road.



Most of the Little Compton houses built since World War II are in the "modern colonial" mode. Pedestrian "colonial" design has long plagued American domestic architecture; many preferred it to the sometimes aesthetically incomprehensible or indigestible modernist school. In Little Compton, however, the use of early American architectural sources occurs primarily as a continued concern with construction appropriate to the town's heritage. As a result, these houses use simple, traditional forms and materials and are remarkable individually for the general unobtrusiveness and collectively for their continuity with the town's built landscape.

Tract development has been limited in Little Compton. Only two notable developments have occurred: Chace's Point, off of Shaw Road near the south shore, and Windmill Hill, west of West Main Road near the Tiverton town line. The houses are typical one- and two-story tract houses of no particular architectural distinction. Such developments in Little Compton are at odds both in nature and appearance with the town's historical growth patterns. Very much different from what has been built here previously, they are worthy of comment only insofar as they represent a significant, externally derived, and ultimately inappropriate approach to residential development.

THE PRESENT—AND THE FUTURE

The forces shaping the built environment in Little Compton have changed in recent years. Little Compton imposed few restrictions on new construction, other than building and fire codes, until 1970, when the town adopted two-acre minimum lot size for residential construction as a way of preserving the town's rural character, avoiding suburbanization, and maintaining the town's relatively small population. The visual cogency of Little Compton's historic development and the town's magnificent physical setting have made the town ever increasingly desirable as a country retreat for residents of all of Rhode Island as well as nearby Massachusetts, New York, and Washington D. C. As a result, the demand for new construction mounts yearly, and the price of real estate similarly escalates. The pressure for increased development will continue partially because of the heavy reliance of this quiet, seaside town on the seasonal presence of part-time residents, both as taxpayers and as consumers. The town retains an agricultural base, expanded since 1975 by the presence of Sakonnet Vineyards in the town's north end, but farming alone cannot support this principally residential community. The growth of Little Compton's popularity as a summer place perhaps helped to end the long years of the town's population decline, particularly as summer residents began to choose the town as a place to retire. But the town's continued growth could threaten another decline—in visual and architectural quality. Town officials and residents will have to plan carefully to retain the balance that the town has long enjoyed in environment, architecture, population, and economy.

CONCLUSION

The rolling coastal plains of Little Compton, isolated from centers of activity in pre-history and history, have played an important part in the town's development. Removed as it is from the rest of the world, Little Compton has enjoyed over three centuries of quiet, slow development, remarkably unbuffeted from forces that have dramatically changed most of the rest of the country. The town's isolation has been not only physical, but also psychological: in almost every activity that occurred here to shape the town as we know it today, Little Compton has behaved independently. As a result, Little Compton has an extraordinarily well defined sense of itself as well as a highly coherent built environment. The interrelationship between the land, the plants and trees, the landscape features, and the buildings is one of the most strongly developed in the state. Little Compton largely remains, as Sarah Orne Jewett wrote in the late nineteenth century, "like the places one goes to on the way to sleep."³¹

Few towns in New England can tell so well the story that Little Compton does. Architecturally, the town is home to notable seventeenth and eighteenth century structures, modest yet important civic buildings, nineteenth-century farm complexes, and exceptionally well designed country houses of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Historically, it documents many phases of New England's rural, agricultural, and recreational past that have long since disappeared elsewhere. Above all, its historical legacy, a pre-eminent part of the town's collective consciousness, and its natural setting remain mutually balanced and enhanced.

³¹Wilbour, *op. cit.*, p.254.



Figure 34. Gray House (ca. 1685 et seq.), 361 West Main Road. Illustration of the house as it evolved over three centuries, before the northern section was destroyed by fire in 1984.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Little Compton's architectural, historical, and natural legacy are closely intertwined in making it what it is today. Its natural and man-made environments exist in a balance that is as fragile as it is remarkable. The town's isolation and strong sense of the past have largely encouraged the maintenance of this delicate equilibrium, but the very qualities that have made the place so appealing to generations of residents and visitors could be easily and irretrievably lost in the course of only a few years, if the town were to accommodate the unbridled development pressure that increasingly occurs in many coastal New England towns.

In planning for Little Compton's future, two key elements should dominate: the historical continuity in the design of the town's buildings and structures and the visual dominance of the natural and man-made landscape. Few communities in the state can match the coherence of architectural design of Little Compton. The important relationships between the built environment and the natural environment that exist throughout the town play an important role in defining the character of Little Compton.

The following recommendations are offered as a means of preserving not only the important historic resources of Little Compton, but also its very special sense of time and place.

EDUCATION

The basis for any comprehensive, successful preservation program lies in a broad-based understanding of the sites, structures, buildings, and objects worthy of preservation. Little Compton, perhaps more than any other Rhode Island community, has a strong sense of and appreciation for its past, but the town's traditional attitudes toward its heritage could be weakened as Little Compton undergoes the most dramatic growth in its history. Property owners and town officials must realize that a thorough understanding of the town's resources is necessary for making decisions that will affect the town's future.

The potential for educational opportunities is broad. The publication of articles dealing with local history in the *Sakonnet Times* already provides wide dissemination, and the creation of a regular, in-depth series of articles could build upon this effort. Lecture series, sponsored by the Little Compton Historical Society, for example, would be a fine forum for explanation of the town's history and its rich architectural heritage. A component in the school curriculum of local history with particular emphasis on the town's architecture could be worthwhile in preparing another generation of stewards of the town's heritage. The institution of a marker program for historic buildings has proved elsewhere to be an effective means of educating the public and individual property owners about preserving important buildings and encouraging proper treatment during rehabilitation or restoration.

NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

Many of the town's buildings and structures are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, either individually or as part of historic districts. These properties would then be ensured limited protection from disruptive projects funded by the federal government. National Register listing of all eligible properties should be a high priority for the town.

The following Little Compton properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Commons Historic District
William Walley Homestead, 33 Burchard Avenue
Sakonnet Point Light, Little Cormorant Rock

The following Little Compton properties deserve further research to determine their eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

- 18 Amesbury Lane: Case Farm (18th century)
- 64 Colebrook Road: Zebedee Manchester Homestead (ca. 1790)
- 178 John Dyer Road: Nathaniel Gifford (?) House (18th century)
- 26 John Sisson Road: House (17th [?], 18th century, 1967)
- 500 Long Highway: John Sowle Farm (ca. 1850)
- 61 Maple Avenue: Wilbour-Brownell Farm (ca. 1827 [?], 19th century)
- 68 Maple Avenue: Lake-Pierce Farm (ca. 1840)
- 89 Maple Avenue: Peckham-Brownell-Dyer Farm (late 18th/early 19th century [?])
- 90B Old Main Road: Almy Farm (late 18th century)
- 10 Old West Main Road: Amy Phillips House (1941-42): Albert Harkness (?), architect
- 16B Old West Main Road: Taylor-Simmons House (late 18th century)
- 79 Peckham Road: Pearce Farm (mid-18th century, late 18th/early 19th century, mid-19th century)
- 63 Peckham Road: Henry B. Simmons House (ca. 1850)
- 97 Round Pond Road: Abbott Phillips House (1926-27): Albert Harkness (?), architect
- 106 Sakonnet Point Road: Simmons-Manchester House (mid-19th century, ca. 1898)
- 122 Sakonnet Point Road: David Sisson House, the "Stone House" (ca. 1854 et seq.)
- 5 Shaw Road: Pardon Brownell House (late 18th century)
- 100 Shaw Road: Briggs Farm (early/mid-18th century)
- 12 South of Commons Road: William Wilbor House (ca. 1850)
- 31 South of Commons Road: Seabury-Richmond-Burchard House (ca. 1840, mid-20th century)
- 35 South of Commons Road: "Seaborn Mary" House (ca. 1730, 1937)
- 59 South of Commons Road: Isaac Bailey Richmond House (ca. 1830, ca. 1890, et seq.)
- 60 South of Commons Road: Malachi Grinnell House (mid-18th century, 1948)



*Figure 35. William Whalley
Homestead (ca. 1820 et seq.),
33 Burchard Avenue.*



Figure 36. Case Farm (18th century?), 18 Amesbury Lane.



Figure 37. Zebedee Manchester House (ca. 1790), 64 Colebrook Road.



Figure 38. Nathaniel Gifford (?) House (18th century), 178 John Dyer Road.



Figure 39. House (17th?/18th century, 1967), 26 John Sisson Road.



*Figure 40. John Sowle Farm
(ca. 1850), 500 Long Highway.*



*Figure 41. Wilbour-Brownell
Farm (ca. 1827?, 19th century),
61 Maple Avenue.*



*Figure 42. Lake-Pierce Farm
(ca. 1840), 68 Maple Avenue.*



*Figure 43. Peckham-Brownell-
Dyer Farm (late 18th/early 19th
century?), 89 Maple Avenue.*



Figure 44. Frederick G. Almy House (late 19th century), 90A Old Main Road.



Figure 45. Taylor-Simmons House (late 18th century), 16B Old West Main Road.



Figure 46. Pearce Farm (mid-18th, late 18th/early 19th century, mid-19th century), 79 Peckham Road.



Figure 47. Henry B. Simmons House (ca. 1850), 63 Peckham Road.



Figure 48. Abbott Phillips House (1926-27), 97 Round Pond Road, Albert Harkness (?), architect.



Figure 49. The David Sisson House, the "Stone House," (ca. 1854 et seq.), 122 Sakonnet Point Road.



Figure 50. William Wilbor House (ca. 1850), 12 South of Commons Road.



Figure 51. Seabury-Richmond Burchard House (ca. 1840, mid-20th century), 31 South of Commons Road.



*Figure 52. Isaac Bailey
Richmond House (ca. 1830, ca.
1890, et seq.), 59 South of
Commons Road.*



*Figure 53. Malachi Grinnell
House (mid-18th century, 1948),
60 South of Commons Road.*



*Figure 54. "Red Feather Farm,"
the Almy Farm (mid-/late 19th
century), 191 West Main Road.*



*Figure 55. Barn (18th
century?), 193 West Main Road.*



Figure 56. Friends Meeting House (1815), 234 West Main Road.



Figure 57. "Bumble Bee Farm," the Frenning House (1938-40), 316 West Main Road, Blanche Borden Frenning, designer/architect.



Figure 58. Brownell House (1804), 411 West Main Road.



Figure 59. "Old Acre," the Church-Burchard House (ca. 1841, ca. 1890), 420 West Main Road.

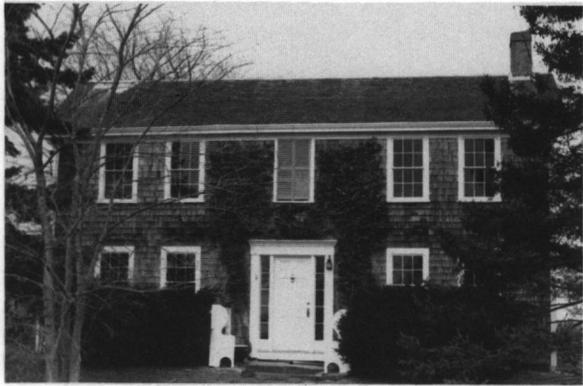


Figure 60. Simmons-Wood-Palmer House (mid-/late 18th century?, early 19th century), 438 West Main Road.



Figure 61. Church Farm (late 18th century), 466 West Main Road.



Figure 62. Adamsville Village.



*Figure 63. Warren's Point
Beach, view to the east, ca.
1900. Arthur B. Aspinwall,
photographer. Seaconnet Point
and Little Compton.*

23 Taylor's Lane South: Daniel Drake-Smith House (1928-29): Edwin Emory Cull, architect
60 Treaty Rock Road: Treaty Rock
191 West Main Road: "Red Feather Farm," the Almy Farm (18th century)
193 West Main Road: Barn (18th century)
228 West Main Road: John Hunt Farm (18th century)
234 West Main Road: Friends Meeting House (1815)
311 West Main Road: David White Farm (ca. 1840)
316 West Main Road: "Bumble Bee Farm," the Frenning House (ca. 1940): Blanche Borden Frenning, designer/architect
411 West Main Road: Brownell Farm (1804)
420 West Main Road: "Old Acre," the Church-Burchard House (ca. 1841, ca. 1890)
438 West Main Road: Simmons-Wood-Palmer House (18th century, early 19th century)
466 West Main Road: Church Farm (late 18th century)
2 Wilbour Woods: Wilbour Woods (1847, ca. 1890, 1937)

The following areas deserve consideration as National Register Historic Districts.

Adamsville Historic District
Taylor's Lane Historic District
Warren's Point Historic District
West Main Road Historic District

EASEMENTS

Easements are the strongest, best method for preserving important elements of our heritage. Owners of historic property may want to consider the donation of an historic preservation easement. An easement is a legal instrument an owner can use to ensure the protection and preservation of the architectural and historical character of a property while retaining use of the entire property. The portions of the property covered by the easement are protected in perpetuity by a qualified agency, and any proposed construction or alteration of these portions of the property must have the prior review and approval of the organization. Easement donations may be considered charitable contributions and thus may offer significant tax advantages for individuals or estates. The Rhode Island Historical Preservation Commission, an organization qualified to accept easements, administers an historic preservation easements program, and further information concerning easements may be obtained from the Commission.

LAND USE AND ZONING

Since 1970, Little Compton has enforced two-acre zoning for residential development. Like other towns in New England that have long retained a strong visual sense of their agricultural heritage, the town instituted a large minimum lot size to promote low density. While such zoning restriction can limit inappropriate density, it does not exclude tract development, a pattern completely at odds with Little Compton's architectural heritage and traditional approach toward land use. Two-acre zoning merely allows for tract developments to sprawl over a larger

area—like that on the west side of Willow Avenue north of the Commons—and ultimately promotes suburban-like homogeneity.

The town should consider revising its zoning town wide to provide lot sizes and uses that vary across the town in compatibility with the buildings and environment of each area rather than adhering to a categorical, town-wide standard. Revised zoning ordinances could allow denser zoning—and perhaps cluster zoning—in some parts of town and far less dense zoning in other areas than currently allowed.

Zoning for density will not entirely protect and preserve Little Compton's environment. For example, new construction may introduce building forms in strong contrast to those existing, allow inappropriate orientation of a building to its site, or fill visually or environmentally sensitive open space. The town may wish to consider establishing controls over new construction, to encourage sympathetically designed new buildings in critical areas and to preserve open vistas, woods, marshes, and seashore. Local historic district zoning offers strong protection for the historic character of an area. Under the provisions of Rhode Island legislation, (Rhode Island General Laws, Ch. 45.24.1, as amended) the Town of Little Compton may create a Historic District Commission whose members would recommend to the Town Council that certain areas be designated as historic zones. The Commission would guide demolitions, new construction, and alterations into patterns which would preserve and enhance the historic character of such zones. Other Rhode Island towns and cities have found such historic district zones to be useful tools in protecting their character.

Further, the town may wish to provide for the understanding and protection of the town's important landscapes and scenic areas. While the preservation of natural resources is normally beyond the scope of a historic preservation planning study, the importance of Little Compton's setting to the understanding of its heritage suggests such considerations. Provisions in the town's master plan should accommodate this irreplaceable resource. An inventory of the Little Compton's open space should be conducted to evaluate those of greatest significance. Through zoning, the town could establish agricultural districts to protect farmland; natural scenery districts to protect important open spaces and views; and forest management provisions to protect woods.

INVENTORY

The inventory is a selective list of sites, structures, objects, buildings, and districts important to an understanding of Little Compton's past and sense of place. Properties included have historic or architectural significance either in themselves, by their association with important individuals or institutions, or as representative examples of common local types. This list is by no means comprehensive, and it does not include archaeological sites. Many worthy properties were not included because space is limited; however, information for most properties in Little Compton is available in the Commission's survey files.

Inventory entries are arranged alphabetically by street and then in numerical order by street number. Properties without street numbers have been entered under the street headings in the same sequence as they appear on the street and have been assigned numbers, which appear in brackets.

Each entry includes the name of the property; significant dates, including date of construction; a brief description; history of the property (when known); and an analysis of its architectural and/or historical significance. Names reflect the original owner or use as well as those of subsequent owners or users whose association with the property is significant. Dates reflect the completion of construction or first occupancy of the property. The architects are given when known. The name, date, and architects are based on primary research, including deeds, tax records, building permits, probate records, and maps. The dates given are approximate, because, like most rural areas, documents like town directories and building permits were not created until relatively recently. Description of the properties is generally limited to the exterior, save for those buildings readily accessible to the public with significant interior spaces. The history—or many of the properties and particularly for houses—often includes only the names and the occupations (when known) of the owners. When further history of the property is known and important, such information is included. Related properties are cross-referenced within the entries.

Unless otherwise noted, all buildings are of wood-frame construction with gable roofs.

Properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places are marked with a double asterisk [**]; those deserving further study to determine eligibility for the National Register are marked with a single asterisk [*]. Properties entered on the National Register or possibly eligible for the National Register are listed in the Recommendations section.

AMESBURY LANE

- *18 Case Farm (18th century?): This 30-acre farm includes a shingled, south-facing farmhouse; a stone and wood-frame barn; and extensive dry-laid stone walls. The farmhouse has a center chimney and a 5-bay facade. The center entrance is framed by pilasters and has a 5-pane transom light, and the windows on the facade abut the eaves cornice, which is mitered out around their caps. Early maps do not show this house, but its form and detail suggest an 18th-century date. By 1850, it belonged to the Case family, several generations of which farmed this land. In 1943 it was sold to Milton and Margaret Carlson, then residents of Brooklyn, New York, for use as a summer house.

ATLANTIC AVENUE

- *9 Warren's Point Beach Club (early 20th-century et seq.): A curving, sandy beach set between two rocky promontories with a modest, wood-frame office and shingled bathhouses on the easternmost outcropping. This private club, established in the early years of this century when sunbathing became a popular leisure activity, takes its name from the point on the south coast of Little Compton first settled in the 17th century by Nathaniel Warren. The land devolved in the Bailey, Grinnell, and Kempton families, and this property was developed by Mary Susan Kempton Clarke (1876-1930). The original pavilions were destroyed in the 1938 hurricane.
- *10 Charles L. Alden House (ca. 1886): A tall, shingled, 2½-story house with a high hip roof and prominent cross gables, an ample veranda on the south and west, now glazed with large plate-glass picture windows. Facing south and prominently sited on a rise above Warren's Point Beach, the house has a sweeping view of the Atlantic Ocean. Mrs. Alden's family began to come to Little Compton for the summer from St. Paul in the early 1880s, and the Aldens, who lived in Troy, New York, soon followed. They stayed in the Bailey House (see 14 Grinnell Road) for several years before moving to this house. The Aldens, like other early summer residents, persuaded friends from home to summer here. John G. Alden, the son of the original owner, was a prominent naval architect; he also owned the property and summered here until 1960.
- *17 John S. Cooke House (ca. 1903): A shingled, 2½-story house with a prominent dormered gable roof that encompasses 2 stories and sweeps down to cover the broad porch on the east and south sides. Like other fine examples of the shingled style of country houses, this horizontal building sprawls across its informally planted site. The Cookes, who lived in Paterson, New Jersey, bought this property in 1901 and completed this house in the next two years.
- *26 Edward D. Duffield House (ca. 1906): A boxy, 2½-story, house with banded shingles and a cross-gable roof; a full-width front porch, now partially glazed, is set within the mass of the house. Elizabeth Curtis Duffield first came to Little Compton in the summers to visit the Aldens (see 10 Atlantic Avenue) and built this house about the time of her marriage to Edward Duffield. The Duffields lived in South Orange, New Jersey.
- *35 Georgia A. Bowen House (ca. 1894): A 2½-story, shingled, Queen Anne house with a 2-story gambrel roof and prominent octagonal tower on the east side. This house follows an often-used Queen Anne format that—here probably not coincidentally—somewhat resembles the Slicer House at 581 West Main Road (q.v.), which incorporates an old octagonal windmill. Mrs. Bowen (1829-99), the daughter of Isaac Bailey Richmond (see 59 South of Commons Road), was one of the few natives of Little Compton to build a summer house in the late 19th century on Warren's Point. The house remained in family hands until the mid-1940s.

BAILEY'S LEDGE ROAD

- 25 Caroline Lloyd Strobell House (early 20th century): A shingled, 2½-story, neo-colonial house with a center entrance framed by an arched trellis and tripartite windows on the 1st story. This house was built for the prominent Chicago communist who co-owned *The Daily Worker*, her brother-in-law Henry W. Goodrich formed the Compton Realty Corporation in 1908 to develop the James Bailey Farm (see 55 Sakonnet Point Road), and several members of the Lloyd and Goodrich families have built summer houses here.
- 29 Caroline Lloyd Strobell House (early 20th century): A shingled, end-gable-roof bungalow with an asymmetrical 4-bay facade. Built on land owned by Caroline Lloyd Strobell (see 25 Bailey's Ledge Road), the house later became the summer residence of art historian Lloyd Goodrich.
- 44 Maude O. Bartlett House (ca. 1920): A wide, low shingled house with a high hip roof intersected by a large gambrel-roof dormer over the center of the symmetrical 7-bay facade; open porches flank the building. Bartlett built this as a summer house soon after this land was platted (see 55 Sakonnet Point Road), and during part of its life it has served as a double house.
- 46 Louise E. Chandler House (ca. 1929): A shingled, 2½-story neo-colonial dwelling with a symmetrical 5-bay facade, latticework front porch, glazed sun porch at one end, and small ell at the other. This trim dwelling was built as a summer house.
- 54 Arthur H. Ruggles House (1929-30): Royal Barry Wills? (Boston), architect. A rambling, 1½-story, neo-colonial house with clapboard front walls and shingled end walls. The centerpiece is a symmetrical, 5-bay-facade, pilaster-framed center-entrance structure with 3 dormers on each slope of the gable roof. Small flanking pavilions, each with an open porch, are set back from the plane of the facade, and an ell projects perpendicularly at the rear. Resembling early Little Compton dwellings, this house embodies the early 20th-century taste for things colonial and picturesque. Ruggles, who lived in Providence, built this as a summer house and occupied it as such for some thirty years.
- 67 Mary E. Newell House (1929-30): A sprawling, asymmetrical shingled bungalow with large, tripartite picture windows on the 1st story and grouped windows in the attic dormer. Newell, who built his as a summer house, lived in Lexington, Massachusetts.

BAY FARM LANE

- 24 James H. Archbold House (1924-25): Martin (New Bedford), architect. An ample, 2½-story Colonial Revival dwelling, sheathed in clapboard, with a 5-bay facade, pedimented entrance porch, and 3 dormers in the gable roof. Archbold, who was treasurer of Standard Oil Company of Canada, built this as a summer house.

BLUFF HEAD AVENUE

- 9 Fo'c's'le Restaurant and Cove Market (ca. 1939): The Fo'c's'le Restaurant is a sprawling, 1-story, vertical-board and shingled structure with many windows, particularly on the east side overlooking the harbor. The market is a 1-story, vertical-board-sheathed structure with a low cross-gabled hip roof. The harborside location of a seafood restaurant and market is a predictable New England phenomenon, and, indeed, such facilities have existed here since the 19th century, when the Clambake House, the Bluff Head Fish Market, and several other shops occupied this site. All were washed out to sea during the 1938 hurricane, and these two buildings were built as replacements the following year.
- 15 Sheds (mid-20th-century): A group of four concrete-block and wood-shingle buildings that serve as storage and processing facilities for the fish brought into port here. These buildings are functionally important to the industry, and their appearance, replete with winches to hoist the cargo from the boats, reinforces the maritime atmosphere of the place.

BROOKSIDE LANE

- *11 House (ca. 1820?): A 2½-story, clapboard-sheathed dwelling with a hip roof and paired interior chimneys and a 1½-story, gable-roof ell at the rear. The 5-bay facade, almost symmetrical, has a trabeated center entrance with full-length sidelights and splayed lintels over the 1st-story windows. The building's form and the stretched horizontality of its proportions suggest an early 19th-century origin. The entrance probably dates to the mid-19th century. The early history of the house is unknown; by 1850, it belonged to Samuel Sanford, whose family retained ownership for the rest of the 19th century.

BROWNELL ROAD

- 38 George Brownell Homestead (ca. 1845?): A 1½- and 2-story dwelling with a 3-bay facade and large additions to the rear. The entrance retains its typically vernacular Greek Revival frame with prominent entablature and sidelights. A large barn and several sheds stand at the rear of the house. Brownell was the eponymous farmer on this road, and the land remains in agricultural use today.
- 60 Henry Butler (?) House (ca. 1845?): A 1½-story vernacular Greek Revival dwelling, barn, shed, corncrib, spring house, and stone walls form the complex for this 25-acre farm. The house has a 4-bay facade and typical Greek Revival sidelight-and-entablature enframing. The outbuildings are probably late 19th and 20th century in origin. Butler lived here in the mid-19th century and probably farmed the land; Jonathan T. Seabury purchased the property in 1890 and continued to farm it.

BURCHARD AVENUE

- 2 Pierce-Briggs House (18th century?): A rambling, asymmetrical, 1½-story, shingled house with a hip and cross-gable roof. The framing of some of the 6-over-6 windows and the low fieldstone foundation suggest an early date for the house, but the persistence of traditional vernacular forms in Little Compton domestic architecture and the presence of what appear to be numerous alterations complicate dating houses like this one. Mrs. E. Pierce lived here in 1870, and by the late 19th century it belonged to the Briggs family.
- **33 William Whalley Homestead (ca. 1820 et seq.): A 1½-story shingled dwelling with a gable roof, center chimney, asymmetrical 5-bay facade, and a one-story ell, built in several stages, on the northwest corner. The main block of the house was built in two stages: at first, it was a four-bay-facade, off-center-chimney house; soon after this section was built, the one-bay section on the west side of the house was added. Nails used in the house have been dated to between 1815 and 1825. Stone walls divide the house from adjacent fields, and a barn, probably late nineteenth century, stands south of the house, which overlooks the reservoir. The farm's early history remains obscure, but 20th-century deeds refer to this as "the homestead farm of William Whalley and wife Ann Whalley."

BUTT ROCK ROAD

- 48 House (ca. 1790?): A 2½-story, shingled, center-chimney house with a 5-bay facade and splayed lintels on the first story. The center entrance is within a pedimented Colonial Revival vestibule in front of the plane of the facade. This house belonged to the Shaw family in the mid-19th century; by 1895 it belonged to Maria Seabury. Its surrounding farmlands were divided in the mid-1950s to form the Chace's Point subdevelopment, and this Federal farmhouse is now surrounded by suburban houses.

COLEBROOK ROAD

- 14 Manuel F. Avila House (1926): A boxy, 2½-story, painted-shingle Colonial Revival dwelling with a cross-gable roof and enclosed front porch; the gable end on the facade has a Palladian window. According to local tradition, the first owner of this house was involved in rum-running on the Sakonnet River during Prohibition.
- *64 Zebedee Manchester Homestead (ca. 1790): This handsome complex includes a farmhouse and several outbuildings. The low, 1½-story, painted shingle dwelling has a center chimney, 3-bay facade with center entrance, and 1-story ell at rear. The outbuildings include a 2-story shingled barn, a shingled corncrib, and a well head. The well-landscaped grounds include trees, shrubbery, and stone walls. Zebedee Manchester was a blacksmith; he assembled this farm from several parcels of land purchased between 1784 and 1792. The property remained in Manchester family ownership until 1883.

COLEBROOK ROAD (continued)

- 74 Gifford-Taber-Wilcox House (ca. 1810): A 1½-story, shingled house with a center chimney and 6-bay (originally 5-bay) facade with a center entrance. Joseph Gifford gave the land for this house to his son Sylvester in 1808, and the house was probably built soon after. Cornelius Taber owned the property, from 1848 until 1877, as did Foster H. Wilcox, from 1887 until the early 1940s.

COMMONS

- **1 United Congregational Church (1832, 1871, 1974, 1986): A white clapboard church, 3 bays deep, set on a high basement with a projecting central pavilion, tower, and spire on the facade. Built as a rather plain meetinghouse in 1832, the building was raised and remodeled in 1871; the Modern Gothic detail on the tower and spire date from this period. In 1974 the church was refurbished (Irving B. Haynes and Associates, Providence, architects), including the removal and restoration of the spire. The 1986 addition at the rear provides access for the handicapped. The Congregational Church has always been an important institution in Little Compton as, indeed, it was in most Massachusetts towns. The act of incorporation provided for "a right of land granted to the exclusive use of the ministry." The minister was chosen in town meeting, as he was in Massachusetts, but no municipal tax for his support was levied, as in Rhode Island; early church services were held in the town meetinghouse for twenty-five years. The second building, first occupied in 1724, stood more or less in the same location as this one. By the early 1830s, the 18th-century structure was dilapidated, and the Congregational Society voted to replace it in March of 1832. Adjacent to the church is the burying ground (see 5 Commons), and together they present the very image of a New England village. The tall spire further serves as a town landmark, visible from many parts of town.
- **2 House (1825, 1839, 1840): A shingled, 2½-story house with paired interior chimneys, an ell at the rear, and a 5-bay facade with center entrance within a 1-story porch; the cornices of the main block of the house and of the porch are bracketed. The rear portion of this building originally served as the Methodist church on West Main Road (see 30 Commons) It was moved here in 1839, and the front portion was built the following year.
- **4 Mrs. Wilbur House (ca. 1860?): A 2½-story clapboard house with paired interior chimneys and a 5-bay facade with center entrance framed by sidelights. The windows have bracketed caps, and the cornice has a dentil course and paired brackets. Mrs. Wilbur lived here by 1862. This house is typical of rural Rhode Island domestic architecture of the mid-19th century: it retains traditional forms but embellishes them with new, machine-cut trim.
- **5 Old Burying Ground (1675 et seq.): A cemetery immediately west of the Congregational Church with north-south rows of tombstones. The earliest of these date from the 17th century, and the cemetery includes a number of slate markers, both vertical and ledger stones. This is the

COMMONS (continued)

- final resting place for the remains of several figures prominent in local history, including Elizabeth Alden and Benjamin Church.
- **12** Union Cemetery (1850 et seq.): This small private cemetery, on the south side of the Commons, is filled with granite and marble stones from the mid- and late 19th century. Notable markers include a statue of Colonel Henry T. Sisson (see 122 Sakonnet Point Road) and the town's Civil War monument.
- **20** Abram Wordell's Blacksmith Shop (late 19th century): A 2-story, end-gable-roof clapboard structure with a new storefront and a large center window flanked by smaller ones on the second story. This is the only remaining of two blacksmith shops built on the Commons in the 19th century. The blacksmith played an important role in 19th-century agricultural society, not only shoeing horses, but also making and repairing farm tools and wagon parts. Now somewhat altered, this building nevertheless recalls a significant activity in the town's center.
- **28** Josephine F. Wilbour School (1929): The original building, which faces the Commons, is a symmetrical 1-story stone structure set on a high basement with a hip roof and a small cupola at the center of the building; the center entrance is within a pedimented porch with paired columns. The addition, at the rear of the original structure, is a 2-story structure with a low gable roof. Until the completion of this school, students in Little Compton attended the various 1-room schoolhouses located around town (see 209 Long Highway, 456 Long Highway, and 270 West Main Road).
- **30** Methodist Church (1840, 1872): A 2-story Greek Revival structure—now altered—with a 3-bay facade and pedimented end-gable roof above a broad entablature. Originally the building had a short tower centered above the facade, paired entrances (in the 1st and 3rd bays) and broad steps the full width of the building. Little Compton's earliest Methodist services were held in Lemuel Sisson's house at Sakonnet Point; the first Methodist church erected was on West Main Road in 1825 (see 2 Commons). This building was superseded by a later structure erected just across the street at the west end of the common in 1872, after which this building was converted to use as a lodge by the Independent Order of Odd Fellows. The later Methodist church, damaged by the hurricane of 1944, was subsequently demolished; by that time the Methodists had joined the Congregationalists in worship.
- **34** Grange Hall (1902): A shingled, 2½-story building with a jerkinhead gable roof, truncated corners on the 1st story, paired and banded windows, and two entrances on the 1st story, one set within a round-head arch. The Grange movement began in the Midwest in the 1860s and was there a strong political force; in New England it was more of a social and educational institution. The movement came to Rhode Island in 1887, and Little Compton Grange No. 32 was established in 1894 with 49 charter members.
- **38** Number 8 Schoolhouse (ca. 1845, 1986-87): A 1-story, clapboard building set gable end to the street with a bracketed, hip-roof cupola

COMMONS (continued)

- set above the 3-bay facade, which has a pair of narrow 6-over-6 sash windows in the center and a door to the right (the other door, on the left side, has been removed). Little Compton redivided into 10 school districts following the report of a committee to the Town Council in 1844; this building may well have been built soon after, judging from its appearance. Its form follows that used throughout the state for 1-room schoolhouses, and the cupola closely resembles those on designs by Thomas Tefft, whose early architectural career included a number of schoolhouses done for Rhode Island Commissioner of Public Education Henry Barnard. The building continued to serve as a school until the completion of the Wilbour School in 1929 (see 28 Commons). In 1986-86, it was connected to the Town Hall (q.v.) by an addition at the rear of the building, designed by The Newport Collaborative.
- **40** Town Hall (1880-82): A plain, 2½-story, clapboarded building set gable end to the street with a 3-bay facade and hooded center entrance. Little Compton's first Town House, which served for both civic and religious gatherings, was built on the Commons in 1693. This building superseded it, but the old building stood until 1917, when it was destroyed by fire. This building was put into service on 5 April 1882.
- **44** Brownell Library (1929, 1961-63): Charles G. Loring (Boston), architect; Richard Kinnicutt, architect for addition. A brick (originally painted white), 1-story, Colonial Revival building with a slate roof and 5-bay facade with center entrance in a wood-frame, pedimented, projecting pavilion. Begun as a private library established under the will of Pardon C. Brownell (1841-1921), this was operated as a free library for the people of Little Compton; in 1961, the Brownell Library merged with the Little Compton Free Public Library, established in 1879 and kept in the nearby Town Hall. Following the merger, the Public Library moved into this building, expanded to accommodate both collections. Loring, the architect, designed a number of small libraries in the northeast; this building illustrated his essay "The Small Public Library," which appeared in *Architectural Record* in July, 1932.
- **48** Oliver C. Brownell House (ca. 1850): A clapboard, 2½-story dwelling with paired interior chimneys and a 1½-story ell parallel to the main block at its southeast. The main block has a 3-bay facade with center entrance within a 1-story bracketed porch with palmette-and-anthemion iron cresting; above the porch is a pair of round-head windows. The 1st-story windows are large and capped with bracketed lintels. The porch on the front of the ell has detail similar to that on the front porch, and it has been partially glazed. In front of the house is a fine cast-iron fence also with palmette-and-anthemion detail.

CONGRESS STREET

- 6** Joseph B. Platt House (ca. 1941): Joseph B. Platt, architect. A rambling, shingled, 2-story dwelling with a salt-box roof and small-paned windows; it is built on the foundations of an old barn, and the grounds include handsome stone walls and gardens. Joseph Platt (born

CONGRESS STREET (continued)

1895) was an industrial and interior designer; perhaps the best known of his work are the interior sets for the motion pictures *Gone With the Wind* and *Rebecca*. He also did this, his own house: its picturesque, well landscaped setting creates an image as evocative as that presented by his sets. Here we see a realization of the popular perception of comfortable, relaxed weekends and summers in the country. June Evans Platt, the architect's wife, was a prolific cookbook author.

CRANDALL ROAD

- 3 Mary A. Clayton House (ca. 1897): A clapboard, 2½-story Queen Anne house with a sweeping cross-gable roof, corner entrance porch set within the mass of the house, and paired windows. One of the few clapboard Queen Anne houses in Little Compton, this house is similar in form to houses built contemporarily throughout the state.
- 27 John Sanford House (ca 1790?): A shingled cottage with a center chimney and 5-bay facade with center entrance; the windows under the eaves cornice abut it, and those on the sides have splayed lintels. Sanford, a yeoman, is the earliest known owner of this house; in 1824, he sold it to Andrew Almy, a mariner.
- 78 Gifford-Hicks House (ca. 1840): A Greek Revival cottage set gable end to the street with an ell perpendicular to the main block of the house. The 3-bay facade has an entrance to one side with full-length sidelights and a full entablature. John Gifford, yeoman, sold this property to Joseph P. Hicks, merchant, in 1843, but records do not indicate whether the house was then standing; it is similar to many such small Greek Revival houses built across the state in the 1840s.

EAST MAIN ROAD

- 55 Pardon Almy House (ca. 1845): A typical Little Compton Greek Revival house, this 1 3/4-story, clapboard dwelling has a 5-bay facade, center entrance with entablature, and small "eyebrow" windows above the 1st-story fenestration. There is a 1½-story ell parallel to the main block at the rear. Almy, a yeoman, bought this property in the spring of 1845 and may well have built this house soon after.
- 137 Jonathan E. Pierce Homestead (ca 1850): A 2½-story, clapboard, Greek Revival structure set gable end to the street with a 3-bay facade and an ell set perpendicular to the house at the rear. The front entrance, set to one side of the facade, has a full entablature supported by pilasters and full-length sidelights. A late 19th-century turned-spindle porch is at the front of the ell. There is a handsome stone wall along the road, and the several outbuildings include a barn, sheds, and a corncrib. Pierce and his heirs owned this property until 1911; the 1850 map indicates a blacksmith shop on this property. As late as 1954, this property included title in interest in and to a seaweed privilege at "South Shore," including all "tipping privileges."

GOODRICH LANE

- 11 William Sinclair House (1911-12): A large, 2½-story, shingled bungalow with a sweeping, 2-story roof and ample shed dormer; the front porch is set within the mass of the house enclosed by the roof. The informal design of bungalows like this made them popular for summer houses in the first three decades of the 20th-century.

GRANGE AVENUE

- 21- Town Asylum (ca. 1830, 1832): A 1½-story shingled house with a 5-bay facade, center entrance with blind elliptical fanlight, and chimneys (one brick, one stone) at either end of the gable roof. Care for the poor by the town began in colonial times, and rooms were set aside in the Town House on the Commons for this purpose. The town bought this property in 1832 as a poor farm, and it remained in use as such into the twentieth century, when welfare activities were taken over by the state. This property then reverted to private use.
- 39 Walter Feldman House (1964-65): A modern, 2-story, board-and-batten-sheathed house with low gable and shed roofs. This is one of the few modernist houses built in Little Compton, where traditional form and detail predominate. It was built as a summer house for a professor of art at Brown University.

GRINNELL ROAD

- *5 Thomas Warren Kempton House (late 19th century): A clapboarded, 2½-story house with a cross gable roof and large ell with shed dormers on the south end. Across the front is an ample porch with paired Tuscan columns, and an octagonal cupola caps the roof at the intersection of the gables. Kempton was a descendant of the Baileys and the Grinnells, who had long owned the property at Warren's Point. This large, relatively simple house was built as a summer house just at the time this area was beginning to develop as a summer colony. A large barn at the rear was destroyed by fire.
- *14 Thomas Bailey House (ca. 1700): A shingled cottage with a gambrel roof, center chimney, and two small, projecting wings on the northeast and northwest corners of the house. The elevations of the building are asymmetrical. The windows have 12-over-12 sash. Low stone walls surround the property. This is the oldest house on Warren's Point, built when this area was the Bailey's farm. It remained in family ownership, in the hands of Baileys, Grinnells, and Kemptons, well into the 20th century. Beautifully sited on a low rise and surrounded by several trees, the house overlooks the Atlantic Ocean and presents the quintessential image of sea-side New England.
- *24 "Gatherem," the Edwin W. Winter House (ca. 1905): Stone, Carpenter & Willson (Providence), architects. An ample and very handsome 2½-story shingled dwelling with a 2-story gable roof that sweeps over two

GRINNELL ROAD (continued)

rows of dormers to enclose the wide front porch within the mass of the house. The Winters, like their neighbors the Cloughs (see 25 Grinnell Road), lived in St. Paul, Minnesota, and built this as a summer house. It is one of the finest turn-of-the-century summer houses in Little Compton and, designed as it is by one of the state's leading architectural firms, relates to other stylish summer houses built along the New England coast during these years. Stone, Carpenter & Willson had several Little Compton commissions in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but all save this and the Slicer House (see 581 West Main Road) have disappeared. In the mid-20th century, Providence architect Edwin Emory Cull renovated—and somewhat simplified—the house.

- *25 William P. Clough House (ca. 1886): A high-shouldered, 2½-story shingled house with a cross gable roof and wrap-around porch. Clough lived in St. Paul and began to summer in Little Compton after his acquaintances there started coming here in the early 1880s. This house and the Alden House next door at 10 Atlantic Avenue were among the first of the large shingled summer houses that give Warren's Point so much of its sense of place. The rear ell of this house was removed in the 20th century and moved to the north as a separate dwelling; subsequent additions to the house have since substantially replaced the portion removed.

JOHN DYER ROAD

- *178 Nathaniel Gifford (?) House (18th century): A shingled, 2½-story, center-chimney dwelling with a center entrance, asymmetrical 3-bay facade, ells at side and rear, and garage and shed at rear. The early history of this well-preserved house remains unknown; in the mid-19th century it belonged to Gifford, who farmed the surrounding land, and his heirs owned the property until 1909.

JOHN SISSON ROAD

- *26 House (17th [?], 18th century, 1967): A 2½-story, off-center chimney dwelling with a center entrance with transom light and a 2-story ell on the east side parallel to the main block of the house. The interior of this house suggests an early date; the exterior has been reworked at least twice: in the 18th or early 19th century and a restoration in 1967. Its early history is unknown; it belonged to Joseph Sisson (1801-76) by the mid-19th century and remained in family ownership until the 1940s.

KEMPTON PLACE

- *7 Annie D. (Mrs. Gorham) Parks House (1897-98): An ample, 2½-story shingled house with tall chimneys, a high cross-gable roof, and a wide

KEMPTON PLACE (continued)

porch that wraps around 3 sides of the house, which faces south overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. There is a 1½-story carriage house at the rear of the property. Mrs. Parks bought the land this house stands on from Thomas Warren Kempton (see 5 Grinnell Road) in 1897 and began construction of her summer house soon after. It remained in family ownership until 1956.

- *9 World War II Observation Post (1940): A 1½-story, shingle and reinforced-concrete structure with a shed dormer and 3 chimneys in the gable roof and narrow ribbon windows. Overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, this house-like structure was designed to blend with neighboring houses and built to provide a look-out spot for attacking enemy aircraft or ship movement. After World War II it was converted into a summer house, becoming what it had appeared to be all along.

LITTLE POND COVE ROAD

- 4 Hall-Aldrich House (1909): A spreading, 1½-story, shingled bungalow with a roof deck atop the cross-gable roof which sweeps down over the wrap-around porch to incorporate it into the mass of the building. When Mabel Smith Hall bought this property in October 1908, it included only a "frame observatory;" she built this house and sold it to Harriet Aldrich in September 1909.

LONG HIGHWAY

- 209 Number 5 Schoolhouse (ca. 1846, 1930-31): A 1-story, whitewashed stone structure with a wood-shingled cross-gable roof. The town bought this land from Stephen Simmons in 1846 and built this schoolhouse after the town was redivided into 10 districts in 1844. It remained in educational use until the Wilbour School opened in 1928; Ambrose Bliss bought this property in 1930 and remodeled it as a dwelling. It now much less recalls its original use than it resembles the stone vernacular architecture of the French countryside, a popular inspiration for country houses in the 1920s and 1930s.
- 451 Rhode Island Red Monument (1954): A granite stone with a bronze marker commemorating the centennial of the development of this chicken breed here on William Tripp's farm; the farmhouse is across the street at 463 Long Highway (q.v.). This is the second such monument erected in Little Compton; the first one stands at [11] Main Street (q.v.) in Adamsville.
- 456 Number 9 Schoolhouse (ca. 1845): A 1-story shingled structure with a gable roof. This small building was probably built after the town was redivided into 10 districts in 1844. It continued to serve that function until the completion of the Wilbur School at 28 Commons (q.v.).

LONG HIGHWAY (continued)

- 456 Thomas C. Wilbour House (ca. 1845): A 1½-story clapboarded Greek Revival cottage with paired interior chimneys, 5-bay facade, and center entrance framed by sidelights and capped by a broad entablature. Outbuildings for this farmhouse include a barn and sheds, and these are separated from the fields and house by stone walls. Wilbour (1805-62) owned this property by 1850, and his estate sold it to Horace W. Bixby (1824-1913) in 1867. The property remained in the hands of his heirs until the 1960s; it is still actively farmed today.
- 463 William Tripp House (ca. 1820?, ca. 1850?): A small, center-chimney cottage with a 5-bay facade; the center entrance, framed by sidelights and capped by an entablature, is probably a later addition to what appears otherwise to be a Federal-era dwelling. Tripp (1824-91) was largely responsible for the development of the Rhode Island Red chicken breed. He began experimenting with chicken breeding here in 1854, reputedly crossing a chicken imported into New Bedford from southeast Asia with local fowl. These "Tripp fowls" were further crossbred, and by the turn of the century, the breed had been designated the "Rhode Island Red." A marker to the Rhode Island Red is across the road at 451 Long Highway.
- *500 John Sowle Farm (ca. 1850): A fine, 2½-story, clapboard, Bracketed house with a square cupola centered on the roof handsomely sited on a wooded knoll well back from the road. The 5-bay facade has a center entrance within a 1-story, porch; the double-leaf entrance has single-pane round-head windows in each door and a large, rounded transom light. Outbuildings include a barn and shed, and stone walls line the property. Sowle farmed the land surrounding this complex; in the 19th century and well into the 20th, it extended from the road all the way east to Quicksand Pond. This is one of the finest—and undoubtedly the most elaborate—mid-19th-century farmhouses in Little Compton.
- 530 Frederick Brownell Homestead Farm (ca. 1840): A 1½-story, shingled Greek Revival house with a 5-bay facade and center entrance framed by sidelights and capped with a wide entablature. Outbuildings include a large, early 20th-century shingled barn with a gambrel roof. Set at the end of a long drive and on a hill overlooking the fields, Quicksand Pond, and the Atlantic Ocean, this farm occupies a commanding site. Brownell (died 1892) farmed this land for much of the 19th century; it remained in family ownership through the first quarter of the 20th century.
- 2 Tunipus-Goosewing Farm: Set on a long, high peninsula overlooking fields, salt ponds, and the Atlantic Ocean, this is an impressively sited complex that includes a shingled, rambling 18th-century cottage; a shingled, 2½-story, late 19th-century house; and stone barns. Also included with the property is the privately owned Goosewing Beach. This farm was the family seat of the Sisson family, who came to Little Compton from Newport in 1816. Lemuel Sisson raised cows here during the 19th century, and various other members of the family lived here or nearby.

MAIN STREET

- *4 Gifford House (ca. 1750, ca. 1870): A 2½-story, clapboard, salt-box-roof, center-chimney house with an ell at the rear. The 6-bay facade is the product of an extension of the original 5-bay facade with center entrance; the bracketed, turned-spindle porch is a later addition. The narrow, projecting windows, with those on the 2nd story abutting the eaves cornice, suggest a mid-18th century date. By the beginning of the 19th century, this house belonged to John Gifford, yeoman. It changed hands several times before 1841, when Joshua Austin acquired it, and it remained in Austin family ownership for much of the rest of the century. Sited facing south just below Grays Mill Pond, this may well be one of the older houses in Adamsville.
- *6 John Gifford House (ca. 1826): Set well back from the road at the end of a lane, this is a fine Federal House, 2½-stories high with a 3-bay main block flanked by wings set back from the line of the facade. The main entrance, set to one side of the center block, has sidelights and is capped by a molded lintel. The house is within a handsomely landscaped garden, and a meadow south of the house stretches down to the Adamsville River. The town—and state—lines pass diagonally through this house, placing the southeast portion in Westport, Massachusetts and the northwest in Little Compton. This house remained in Gifford family ownership until 1948.
- *8 John Gifford House II (ca. 1840): A 1 3/4-story, clapboarded, Greek Revival house set gable end to the street. The 3-bay facade is framed by pilasters, and the entrance, at one side, is framed by sidelights and wide pilasters that support a full entablature over the door. On a low rise close to the road, the house is set behind a granite-post wood-picket fence. When Ephraim W. Brownell bought this property from John Gifford in 1844, this house was standing.
- *10 Church-Manchester Store (ca. 1820): A large, broad, 2½-story, clapboard building set gable end to the street; at the rear stands an ell of recent vintage which also connects the main block to a 1-story wing on the west which previously stood alone. A 1-story porch stretches the full width of the facade, and within it are 2 doors and 3 windows, somewhat irregularly spaced. The 2nd story has 3 regularly spaced windows; the attic has 2. Ebenezer P. Church came to Adamsville from Fairhaven, Massachusetts, in 1818. He built this general store in 1820. In 1838, he took in a partner, Philip Manchester. In 1864, Church sold out to Manchester, and since then the store has been known as Manchester's. It was particularly well known as a source of Adamsville cheese. The store remained in family hands until the 1960s. In new ownership, it is now operated under the Manchester name, but as a restaurant.
- *[11] Rhode Island Red Monument (1925): A large granite boulder with a bronze tablet bearing the image of a chicken and the inscription "To commemorate the birthplace of the Rhode Island Red breed of fowl which originated near this location." The breed indeed originated near—very roughly—this location, at William Tripp's farm on Long Highway (see 451 and 463 Long Highway). The marker was probably placed here, however, because many of these birds were purveyed at

MAIN STREET (continued)

Manchester's Store just across the street (q. v.); indeed, the Manchesters donated the land for the marker, no doubt as a clever marketing ploy. This monument remains the most popularly known structure in Adamsville.

- *[25] Electra Lodge No. 41, Independent Order of Odd Fellows (ca. 1877-78). A deep, 2-story, hip-roof building with a clapboard facade and wood shingles on the other 3 sides. Set several feet above street level, it is reached by a full-width set of steps. The entrance is set to one side of the facade, which has 3 bays on the 1st story and 2 on the 2nd—a 20th-century reworking of the original configuration. The sash windows on the sides retain their bracketed caps. Founded in England in the late 18th century, the Odd Fellows were established in Rhode Island in 1829, and this lodge was established in 1877. The building was used as a lodge until 1967; it has since been converted to retail use.
- *26 Gamaliel Tompkins (?) House (ca. 1800): A handsome, shingled, 2½-story Federal house with a 5-bay facade, pedimented center entrance with 5-light transom, and chimneys centered in each of the end walls. There is a large 2-story ell to the rear with a 1-story bracketed porch the depth of the house and a 1-story addition on the west side. A picket fence separates the house and its gardens from the road. Tompkins (1751-1822) may have built this house; in the early 19th century it belonged to his son Nathaniel (1792-1861), and it remained in Tompkins family ownership until 1914. Since 1947, it has been the home of Rupert von Trapp, whose family's opposition to Hitler and escape from Austria in 1938 were immortalized in the Rogers & Hammerstein musical "The Sound of Music."
- *[35] Gifford-White House (ca. 1800): A 2½-story, painted shingle house with a full-width front porch supported by square piers and a 1 3/4-story ell to the left of the main block; the ell has a 1-story, full-width addition across its front. The facade of the main block is divided into 3 bays; the 1st story, within the porch, is faced with flushboard and has a center entrance. The house sits close to the road and is separated from it by a picket fence. The Gifford family were early settlers of Adamsville; an 1842 deed refers to this as the "Homestead of Sylvester Gifford," and the house remained in Gifford ownership until Dr. George F. S. White bought it in 1855. Dr. White developed a patent medicine remedy for diphtheria, marketed as "White's Specialty."

MAPLE AVENUE

- *61 Wilbour-Brownell Farm (ca. 1827 [?], 19th century): The shingled farmhouse here is composed of two distinct sections: the older, western section is a 1½-story, center chimney, south-facing block with a 5-bay facade and the entrance in the second bay from the west end; the 1 3/4-story eastern section, set slightly forward of the western section, has a gable roof parallel to that on the western section. A barn stands to the west of the house, and stone walls line the property. The transfer of this property from Thomas Wilbour to Joseph Wilbour

MAPLE AVENUE (continued)

in April 1827 makes no reference to buildings, but the western section of the house may well have been standing when Joseph Wilbour sold the land to Henry Brownell in May 1831. It remained in Brownell or Wilbour family ownership for most of the 19th century.

- *68 Lake-Pierce Farm (ca. 1840): A 3-acre parcel of land with farmhouse and outbuildings, this is a small, but intact remnant of a once larger farm. The farmhouse is a simple, typical 1½-story, clapboard, Greek Revival dwelling set gable end to the street with shed dormers and a 3-bay facade; the entrance is framed by sidelights and capped by a broad entablature. Outbuildings include a shingled barn; sheds, and a corncrib; stone walls line the property. Otis Lake was living here by 1850, but by 1870 Benjamin S. Pierce owned the farm, which included 60 acres by 1895.
- *89 Peckham-Brownell-Dyer Farm (late 18th/early 19th century [?]): A small, shingled, center-chimney cottage with a 1 3/4-story ell. Outbuildings include a barn and a shed, and stone walls line the property. A deed of 1872 describes this as the "homestead farm of the late Clark Brownell and formerly of Peleg Peckham." Brownell (1793-1871) lived here during the mid-19th century; after his death, his son sold it to Horace G. Dyer, whose family continued to own it until 1970.
- 100 Broadbent-Brownell Farm (late 18th/early 19th century [?]): Comprising 43 acres, this farm, now heavily wooded with 2nd- or 3rd-growth trees, has a shingled, center-chimney, 5-bay facade cottage with a center entrance and an ell at the rear. The early history of the farm remains obscure. Samuel Broadbent bought the property in 1843 and lived here until 1880, when Frank Brownell bought it; it remained in Brownell family ownership until the 1930s.

MEADOW LANE

- 59 Leonard Colt House (1965): Richard Wills of Wills Associates (Boston), architect. A rambling, 1-story, neo-colonial house sheathed in wood shingle and brick. This handsomely landscaped complex is sited at the end of a long private lane north of Briggs Marsh. The architectural firm was established by the architect's father, Royal Barry Wills, and has long specialized in high quality colonial reproduction and neo-colonial designs. The prevalent and continuing taste for such in Little Compton has fostered the town's visual continuity in the 20th century.

MEETINGHOUSE LANE

- **1 Brownell House (18th century, 1823): A 1½-story, center chimney house with a 5-bay facade, center entrance, and 1-story wing to the north; the facade of the wing is in the same plane as that of the facade. The entrance is framed with sidelights. The exterior of this house resembles an early 19th-century house consistent with the 1823 date, but interior evidence suggests that this exterior encloses—at least

MEETINGHOUSE LANE (continued)

- partially—an old interior; unusual is the curving, double flight of stairs on the interior. By 1850, this was the residence of Deacon Otis Wilbor, town clerk from 1840 to 1856. Given in 1915 to the Village Improvement Society in memory of Elizabeth and Deborah Brownell, it has since served as a community center.
- 8 Methodist Society Parsonage (ca. 1840): A 1½-story, 3-bay-facade Greek Revival cottage set gable end to the front with an ell on the right perpendicular to the mass of the house and in the same plane as the facade. The entrance is framed by sidelights and pilasters which support a narrow entablature. This was probably built just about the time the Methodists built their second house of worship on the Commons (see 30 Commons).
- 29 Commercial Building (ca. 1950): A picturesque assemblage of shingled, 1- and 1½-story sheds into a single commercial building; the gables of the roofs are at varying heights and angles, and the small-pane windows are arranged in groups or within oriels on the facade. These old farm buildings were remodeled as shops after World War II. Conversion of rude farm buildings into dwellings and shops became common here in the mid-20th century and can best be understood as a local expression of the general interest in quaint, rural buildings that pervaded architectural taste particularly in the 1930s. The lingering of such an aesthetic has largely contributed in a positive way to the visual homogeneity of Little Compton.
- *62 "Old Acre" Barn (1893): S. D. Kelly (Boston), architect. A large and elaborate, clapboard, Colonial Revival barn with a high hip roof, elliptical leaded fanlight over the main entrance, Palladian window in the attic, and a cupola at the top of the roof. This barn was constructed as part of the extensive rebuilding campaign Edith Church undertook at her family's house in the 1890s (see 420 West Main Road). In the 1950s, this was home of the Carriage House, a summer theatre which gave its first production in 1958.
- 67 House (mid-20th century): A rambling, 1½-story collection of shingled buildings. The central section of this building once served as a corn crib. Like the nearby commercial building (see 29 Meetinghouse Lane), this assembled structure celebrates the rural, picturesque aesthetic as one eminently desirable for a place like Little Compton.

MINNESOTA ROAD

- 4 Fred Dana Marsh House (ca. 1910): Fred Dana Marsh, designer. A stuccoed cottage with steep roof; two chimney stacks, each with three pots; multiple-pane casement windows set within segmental-arch openings, round-head entrance centered in the asymmetrical 5-bay facade, and shed roof wings on either side of the main block. Designed by a painter and muralist (and the father of better known American artist Reginald Marsh); this picturesque, harborside summer house recalls the vernacular dwellings of Brittany, which Marsh must have known from his years in France as an art student. Marsh was an avid

MINNESOTA ROAD (continued)

boatman and kept a motorboat moored in Sakonnet Harbor, at the foot of his lawn.

MONTANA ROAD

- 3 Florence Sayles Hough House (1921-22): A low, 1½-story, shingled bungalow with banded windows, wraparound porch with Craftsman-like ornamentation, and broad, bracketed, cross-gable roof. This bungalow, like its neighbor next door at number 7 (q.v.), was built as a summer cottage. The bungalow gained its early popularity as an informal vacation residence.
- 7 Joseph R. Burrows House (1927): A low, 1½-story, banded-shingle bungalow with grouped windows, rubblestone chimney, wraparound porch, and broad, sweeping gable roof with dormers and exposed rafter ends. Like number 3 (q.v.) next door, this summer cottage was built in the bungalow mode coming into popularity on the East Coast in the early years of the 20th century. This pair presents a handsome juxtaposition of forms that suggests coordination of their design by owners or architects.

MULLEN HILL ROAD

- 67 Farm (18th/19th century): This intact complex includes a small cottage, barn, corn crib, sheds, and fine stone walls. The house has what appears to have been an end chimney (it is now more or less in the center of the building, with an ell on the left of the front door). The early history of the complex is obscure: in 1850, it belonged to George Potter, and by the early 20th century it belonged to Gershom Wordell.

OLD BULL LANE

- 38 William F. Whitmarsh House (ca. 1970): Herbert MacArthur Noyes, Jr. (New Haven, Connecticut), architect. A modern, 2-story, vertical-board-sided house with a large, plate-glass windows, winding exterior staircase, 2nd-story cantilevered deck, low hip roof, and high shed monitor centered on the roof; garages are incorporated into the block of the house. Built as a year-round residence, this house represents a phenomenon increasingly seen in Little Compton—its popularity not only as a summering spot, but further as a year-round community.

OLD MAIN ROAD

- 90A Frederick G. Almy Farm (late 19th century): Still active agricultural-ly, this farm includes fields, farmhouse, and outbuildings. The farmhouse is a shingled, 2½-story, L-plan, house with a cross-gable roof and irregular fenestration. Outbuildings include a shed, a garage, and

OLD MAIN ROAD (continued)

a large, handsome shingled barn with a high stone foundation. The land for this farm, like that adjacent at 90B Old Main Road (q.v.), has long been owned by the Almy family. This parcel was divided from the old farm in the late 19th century by Frederick Almy (1851-1936).

- *90B Almy Farm (late 18th century): Long farmed by Almys, this farm surrounds a well-preserved 18th century farmhouse. The 2½-story, shingled house has a center chimney and 5-bay facade with center entrance; sash on the 1st story are 6-over-6, but those on the 2nd story are small, 3-over-3 sash. The interior retains original painted, grained, and paneled walls. This farm descended from Sanford Almy (1759-1844) to Frederick Almy (1786-1877) and thus to John S. Almy (1815-1904) and to Frederick G. Almy (1851-1936). This farm originally included the land for the adjacent farm at 90A Old Main Road (q.v.).

OLD WEST MAIN ROAD

- *10 Amy Phillips House (1941-42): Albert Harkness (?), architect. A rambling, 1½-story, wood-shingle house with a gambrel roof and the principal entrance in a turreted stone tower. This highly picturesque dwelling alludes to the English and French rural vernacular exemplars which were a popular source for domestic architecture between the two world wars. It is similar to the house at 97 Round Pond Road (q.v.) which Mrs. Phillips built some 15 years earlier. Town records refer to this as the Alexander Simmons Farm; Mrs. Phillips tore down the old farmhouse, but the old barn and a converted corn crib survive.
- *16B Taylor-Simmons House (late 18th century): A shingled, 2½-story house with a 3-bay facade (with a polygonal, 19th-century bay window on the 1st story) and ell at the rear. A 1774 map identifies this property as belonging to Philip Taylor; by the mid-19th century it belonged to Alden Simmons (1809-83).

PATTEN DRIVE

- 24 "Broadview North," the Stafford Almy House (1967): William P. Buffum, Jr., architect. A rambling, 1-story dwelling arranged as a group of pavilions with hip roofs; the walls are covered with vertical board siding. This is a good, typical, architect-designed house of the mid-1960s.

PECKHAM ROAD

- *79 Pearce Farm (mid-18th century, late 18th/early 19th century, mid-19th century): The farmhouse is a large, shingled, 2½-story dwelling with a center chimney and 5-bay facade; the center entrance is framed by sidelights and pilasters which support a broad entablature. Physical evidence suggests that portions of this house date to the mid-18th century; its overall form is akin to houses from the later 18th century,

PECKHAM ROAD (continued)

and the house may have been enlarged at that time. The Greek Revival entrance dates from the mid-19th century. Outbuildings include a barn and a garage. Surrounded by dry-laid stone walls, this handsome house sits amid splendid lawn and gardens. Godfrey Pearce (1772-1849) owned this house in the early 19th century and left it (as well as his desk) upon his death to his son James (1802-96), who probably remodeled the entrance. James Pearce farmed the land, which included 80 acres by the mid-1890s.

- *63 Henry B. Simmons House (ca 1850): A 1½-story Greek Revival house with a 5-bay facade; the center entrance is framed by sidelights and pilasters which support a broad entablature. Attached to the house is a 19th-century barn. Fine stone walls and a well-kept stile in front surround the handsome gardens. Simmons (1800-88) probably farmed the fields around this land; it remained in Simmons family ownership until 1942. The family cemetery is just east of here (see [19] Peckham Road).
- [19] Simmons Cemetery (19th century): A small, family cemetery surrounded by a dry-laid stone wall and a picket gate. The oldest extant stone is that of Priscilla Simmons, who died in 1815. Her son's house stands nearby at 63 Peckham Road (q.v.). Family cemeteries like this are common in Little Compton and often lie near a farm associated with the family.

POTTERSVILLE ROAD

- 14 John S. Palmer House (ca. 1845): A 5-bay-facade, center-entrance dwelling, the Palmer House is distinguished by a central cross gable on the facade, round-arch bargeboards in the gable ends, bracketed lintels over the windows and front door, and corbeled chimneys. The form of this house is typical of mid-century Little Compton vernacular dwellings, while the stylish, Italian-derived trim reflects new influences in Little Compton's architecture. Medievalizing cottages like this are rare in Rhode Island and especially in Little Compton.
- 26 Hoxie Cemetery (19th century): A small family cemetery in fine condition; its handsome stone walls are both ashlar drywall and chinked rubble.
- 32 John Hoxie House (late 19th century): A 1½-story, cross-gable-roof Modern Gothic cottage with wraparound turned-spindle porch and ornamental strutwork in the gable ends. Hoxie (1827-1911) probably built this house; he lived here in the late 19th century, and his heirs owned the property until 1945. This is a fine, well preserved late 19th-century house, particularly notable for its handsome—and probably original—landscaping scheme.
- 64 Hezekiah Wilbour Farm (mid-19th century): This farm includes fields, a barn, and the farmhouse. The house is a 1 3/4-story structure with paired interior chimneys; 5-bay facade with center entrance; small windows in the attic of the facade; and a 1-story ell, with roof ridge

POTTERSVILLE ROAD (continued)

parallel to that on the main block, toward the rear of the main block's east side. A large barn stands to the rear. Wilbour (1802-80) farmed this land, which extended south toward Quicksand Pond; it remained in Wilbour family ownership until 1950.

- 75 Brownell-Case House (early 19th century?): A shingled cottage with a 3-bay facade; the chimney is located at one end, giving this the form of a "half house." The entrance has been somewhat reworked. Like many rural 18th- and early 19th-century houses, this faces south. Early maps indicate that this belonged to P. Brownell as late as 1870, and it has belonged to the Case family since the late 19th century.

QUAKER HILL ROAD

- 78 Frank A. Murphy House (ca. 1927): An ample, shingled bungalow with a rubblestone chimney and a sweeping, bracketed, cross-gable roof that encloses a handsome stucco, brick, and fieldstone porch within the mass of the house. In the 19th century, this land was the farm of Job Briggs. In the early 20th century, discussion of moving the Quaker Meeting House to this spot led to this becoming known as Quaker Hill; the plan never materialized, however, and the land was sold for development. The first of these were small, modest dwellings. This larger house is like a number of similar-scale summer houses that appeared in Little Compton in the 20th century.

QUICKSAND POND ROAD

- 85 Charles Mercer House (1974): An angular, rambling, asymmetrical, dwelling with shingle and stone walls, large plate-glass windows, and shed roofs; facing south overlooking meadows and Quicksand Pond, the building is set on a low rise of land. Built as a year-round house, this handsome dwelling relates particularly well to its surroundings, built as it is on the foundation of a 19th-century outbuilding belonging to the Hezekiah Wilbour Farm (see 64 Pottersville Road).

QUOQUONSET LANE

- 10 House (ca. 1960): A rambling 1- and 2-story shingle and stone dwelling. Like several other 20th-century dwellings in Little Compton, this was made from an old farm outbuildings—here, a corn crib.
- 36 Lawrence Lanpher House (1967): Richard Wills of Wills Associates (Boston), architect. A 2-story, hip-roof dwelling built on a low rise with an attached, 2½-story shingled garage. The front and rear of the house are of painted brick, and the side walls are of clapboard. The Wills firm made its reputation by designing reproduction/adaptations of colonial houses; this uses a combination of traditional and modernist forms in a decidedly modern composition. Lanpher, who worked at

QUOQUONSET LANE (continued)

the Nicholson File Co. and lived in Providence, built this as a summer house.

- 65 Clarinda G. Binger House (mid-19th century, 1949, 1964): A 1½-story shingled house with a cross-gable roof and a blind-fan Federal Revival entrance. After World War II, the house was moved here from West Main Road, where it had been part of the Fort Church installation; at that time, it was remodeled, and the wings to the west and south were added. The shingled, 1½-story guest house, designed by Richard Kinnicutt and added in the 1960s, stands to the east of the main house. Sited on a peninsula formed by the surrounding marshes at the north end of Awashonks Pond, this complex of moved and remodeled and new buildings—two equally popular approaches to mid-20th-century domestic architecture here—enjoys a spectacular view of the water to its south.

ROUND POND ROAD

- 44 William P. Buffum House (1918-19, 1926-27): Albert Harkness (Providence), architect. A small, shingled, cross-gable roof cottage with a fine view of Round Pond and the Atlantic Ocean. Buffum, a Providence doctor, built this house in two stages: the eastern section in 1918-19 and the western, cross-gable section in 1926-27. The design of this house draws heavily on vernacular traditions in Little Compton domestic architecture.
- *97 Abbott Phillips House (1926-27): Albert Harkness (?), architect. A rambling, shingled, Z-plan house with a hip roof and stone entrance tower set at the intersection of the two southern sections of the house. The design of this house draws on sources in French provincial vernacular architecture; the image of picturesque domesticity that it creates was popular in the 1920s and 1930s. Mrs. Phillips moved from here to a similar house at 10 Old West Main Road (q.v.) in 1942.

SAKONNET POINT ROAD

- 20D Nathaniel Atwater House (1963, 1971): William P. Buffum (Providence), architect. A shingled, 1½-story dwelling with salt-box roof; the form of the roof is repeated in reverse on the 1-story addition. This is a simple, modern house with large, plate-glass windows; like many of the modernist houses of the 1950s, '60s, and '70s, this is located in a rather isolated location—here, at the end of a long lane—where it stands on its own rather than contrasting sharply with the homogeneity that architecturally pervades Little Compton. The architect and his family have long ties to the community, and he designed a number of post-war houses in the town.
- 27 George F. Hutchins House (1914-15): A large, rambling, shingled, 2½-story bungalow with banded and grouped windows and a complex, 2-story gable roof with several large dormers. North of the main house is a 1½-story, shingled garage/guest house with shed dormers. The

SAKONNET POINT ROAD (continued)

buildings in this handsome summer-house complex are surrounded by shrubs and trees, and the buildings themselves are partially covered with vines; together, the buildings and grounds present a picturesque vision of quiet summer life very much in keeping with the aesthetics of the era of their creation.

- 35 Lowell Emerson House (ca. 1916): A wide, low, shingled neo-colonial cottage with an ell at rear. The facade has banded, small-pane windows and an off-center round-arch entrance set within a trelliswork hooded porch. In proportion and use of form, this is an unusual and handsome house; it was built as a summer house, possibly using portions of old farm buildings.
- 54 Elizabeth C. Smythe House (18th century?, 1927-29): A rambling, shingled, $1\frac{1}{2}$ -story dwelling. The central section has a 4-bay facade—now extended 2 bays to the west—with an off-center entrance within a round-arch trelliswork porch; it is flanked by two wings, set back from the plane of the facade: the one on the east is $1\frac{1}{2}$ stories; the one on the west, 1 story. The central section is an old house from the 18th or early 19th century moved here in the mid-1920s. Mrs. Smythe extensively remodeled the house, and the flanking wings were added later. Recycling of old buildings has long been an important part of the domestic architectural scene in Little Compton.
- 55 Bailey Homestead (early/mid-19th century et seq.): The central portion of this rambling, shingled farm house is a $2\frac{1}{2}$ -story, 3-bay-facade building with an off-center entrance framed by pilasters which support a wide entablature; the 8-over-12 sash windows have splayed lintels. The house has several additions to both sides and the rear, added to the house over the course of the 19th century as dictated by need and enabled by wealth. This stands on land owned since the 17th century by the Bailey family, which gives its name to the nearby Bailey's Ledge. This house may incorporate portions of another earlier dwelling. By the early 19th century, the farm belonged to John Bailey (1770-1860), who probably built the central section of this house; on his death, it passed to his grandson James Irving Bailey (1833-1904). Henry Goodrich (see 25 Bailey's Ledge Road) bought the property in 1912 as part of the larger parcel he was developing as a summer development; in 1918 he sold this house to Harrison B. Huntoon, a Providence textile manufacturer.
- 79 Wood-Bailey House, now Sakonnet Golf club (mid-/late 18th century, 1909 et seq.): A small, shingled, center-chimney, gambrel-roof cottage with a 4-bay facade, 12-over-12 sash, and splayed lintels; large additions using the same form and detail as the original section stand to its north and east. In the 18th century, this property belonged to Ephraim Wood; by the mid-19th century, it belonged to James H. Bailey, whose family owned large acreage in this part of town (see Bailey's Ledge Road and 55 Sakonnet Point Road). Little Compton developed as a summer spot in the late 19th century just at the time that golf began to emerge as a popular sport for the upper-middle and upper classes. Before the turn of the century, golfers used the acreage at Henry Richmond's farm (see 716 West Main Road); when the Richmond land became unavailable after the turn of the century, the golfers purchased

SAKONNET POINT ROAD (continued)

the Wood-Bailey farm, using the land for links and the farmhouse as a clubhouse. The house has since been expanded to accommodate dining and social functions.

- 95 Bailey-Sisson House (late 18th/early 19th century, mid-19th century): This house was built in at least 2 campaigns: the northern section is a 4-bay-facade, center chimney house with 6-over-6 windows; the southern section is also a 4-bay facade, center-chimney building, but it is lower than the northern section and set back from the plane of the northern section's facade. Identical one-story bracketed porches spread the width of both facades, and 2, 2-story ells stand at the rear. Jeremiah Bailey, whose family held extensive property in this part of town, owned the property as early as 1850; Lemuel Sisson (1805-74) bought it from Bailey. By the time of Sisson's death, the house had already been expanded, for Sisson left to his wife, Comfort, "the use and improvement during her life...[of] the new part of the house and the South East corner bed-room up stairs in old part with privilage [sic] in kitchen & porch in old part...."
- 97 George B. H. Macomber House (ca. 1920): A large, 2½-story, shingled, Colonial Revival house with a 2-story gambrel roof, pilaster-framed entrance (now filled with a bay window) off-center in 6-bay facade, and gambrel roof wings on north end. Part of the Bailey-Sisson farm in the 19th century, this land was sold off by Sisson's granddaughter just at the time that this area was beginning to undergo development as a summer community.
- *106 Simmons-Manchester House (mid-19th century, ca. 1898): A large and—particularly for Little Compton—elaborate shingled house decked out in Colonial Revival trim: it has a 5-bay facade, elaborate center entrance, full-width front porch with Greek Doric columns, 2nd-story balcony, bay windows, roof balustrade, and a belvedere with a tall, octagonal cupola. Valentine Simmons (1802-85), who was living here by 1850, built the house as a Greek Revival cottage; it probably resembled the William Wilbour House at 12 South of Commons Road (q.v.). At the rear of the property is a little altered barn, likely coeval with the house; its lancet-arch windows, identical to those in the above-mentioned Wilbour House, may well have been installed here when the house was remodeled. The house is set among several large black walnut trees. After Simmons's death, the property remained in trust for several of his grandchildren; in 1898 his granddaughter Josephine Manchester and her husband, Lysander, bought the house and probably undertook a major remodeling campaign, raising the house to two stories with the addition of the elaborate balcony on the front, adding ells at the rear, and dressing it up in stylish "Colonial" trim. The Manchesters sold the house in 1901 to Madeleine Lloyd Goodrich, whose family was heavily involved in the development of Bailey's Ledge (q. v.) as a summer community.
- 115 Anna K. Cowen House (ca. 1887-90): An ample, shingled, 2½-story, Queen Anne/Colonial Revival house with a cross-gable roof, tall chimneys, irregular fenestration, and a wraparound veranda. To the rear of the property is a shingled, 1½-story, cross-gable-roof carriage house, probably contemporary with the main house. Mrs. Cowen was

SAKONNET POINT ROAD (continued)

- a resident of Little Compton; the house remains in family ownership in 1986.
- 116 St. Andrew's-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church (1914, 1920, et seq.): This seasonal religious complex includes a small, simple, end-gable-roof chapel with a bellcote at the front of the building, above the small, centered front porch and an early 20th-century, center chimney, neo-colonial cottage used as the rectory. This mission chapel was established in 1914 when Laura Wainwright gave to the diocese a small house at Sakonnet Point. The diocese acquired this property in early 1920. Unlike other denominations in Little Compton, the Episcopalians have not employed full-time clergy and use this building only in the summer.
- *122 David Sisson House, the "Stone House" (ca. 1854 et seq.): A large, imposing, south-facing, 3-story house built of uncoursed fieldstone with a 7-bay facade, a large ell at the rear, and a slate hip roof with an octagonal belvedere at its center; the off-center, double-leaf entrance is within a small, turned-spindle porch. The land this house stands on was the site of a British raid during the Revolution, and in the early 19th century was the Rotch Farm. David Sisson (1803-74) bought the land in 1853 and probably built this house soon thereafter. His son Henry Tillinghast Sisson (1831-1910) acquired the property in 1857. Henry T. Sisson served with distinction during the Civil War, and after his death Rhode Island and Massachusetts funded the construction of a statue to his memory in Union Cemetery (see 12 Commons). He worked as a mill superintendent for A. & W. Sprague Mfg. Co. until its failure in the Panic of 1873, then served three terms as lieutenant governor. Returning here in the late 1870s, Sisson extensively renovated the house and planned a seaside summer resort on his land, platting curving avenues and house lots. Only Round Pond Road itself remains as a vestige of this grand scheme. In 1921, the property passed from family ownership and became an inn—the only one remaining in Little Compton in the late 20th century.
- 131 A. George Gardner House (1920-21): A typical, early 20th-century, shingled, Colonial Revival cottage with a broad, 2-story gambrel roof that sweeps down in front to cover a wrap-around front porch and in the rear to cover a shallow ell; windows are grouped, and a 1-story bay window is on the east side. The south-facing house sits on a low rise well back from Sakonnet Point Road. Gardner built this as a vacation cottage at the time this area was seeing considerable summer-house development.
- 135, 139 S. Newell Smith Cottages (ca. 1920): A fine, handsome pair of shingled summer cottages, similar but not identical, whose forms play handsomely off each other. Number 135 is a symmetrical, squarish house with a high gambrel roof that covers the 2 upper stories and encloses the now-glazed front porch; the porch on the east side of the house is open and unroofed; number 139 is more or less symmetrical, with a sweeping gable roof that encloses the 2 upper stories and the porch, which wraps across the front and around the west side. Both houses sit on a low rise well back from Sakonnet Point Road. They were built by and remained in use by the same family for many

SAKONNET POINT ROAD (continued)

years. Number 135 was extensively remodeled in the early mid-1980s, and the changes lessen the similarities between the two houses.

- 163 Sakonnet Point Yacht Club (1955 et seq.): Thomas Marvell, architect. A 1-story, shingled, gable-roof building with a small ell set on pilings at water's edge; a long wooden dock extends west into Sakonnet Harbor. A mast-configured flagpole, decked out with flags and pennants during the summer season, stands just west of the clubhouse. Established in 1939, the Sakonnet Yacht Club, like those in other seaside communities in New England, plays an important part in the town's recreational life. Pleasure boating became a fashionable pastime among the rich in late 19th- and early 20th-century Rhode Island but, as the variety in size and elaborateness of the boats in the harbor attests, has become increasingly popular in this century.

SHAW ROAD

- *5 Pardon Brownell House (late 18th century): A small, shingled, center-chimney, gambrel-roof cottage with a 4-bay facade and 6-over-6 and 6-over-9 double-hung sash. The south-facing house, surrounded by handsome dry-laid stone walls, is now separated from its farmland to the north. Edmund Brownell (1775-1840), whose family lived here until 1861, inherited the real estate of his father, Pardon Brownell (1745-99) upon his death. Pardon probably built this dwelling, typical of small-scale late 18th-century houses.
- 11 Bennet [?] or Thomas Wilbour House (late 18th or early 19th century): A 2½-story, 5-bay-facade dwelling with paired interior chimneys and a hooded center entrance—both probably mid- to late 19th-century alterations. The molded caps over the windows suggest an earlier date, while the paired interior chimneys suggest a later date; this transitional form probably dates close to 1800. Stone walls surround the house and its outbuildings, which include an outhouse, sheds, and barns. Bennet Wilbour (born 1773) may have built this house; his father, Joseph (born 1742) did not live here, but his son Thomas (1798-1880) did. The house remained in Wilbour family ownership until 1947.
- Brownell Farm (ca. 1860): Located at the corner of Shaw and Long Pasture Roads, the complex includes a farmhouse, a barn, sheds, and stone walls. The 1½-story Greek Revival house has an unusual, asymmetrical facade and an original ell with porch on the east side. The handsome, well-maintained group of buildings belonged to several generations of the Brownell family in the nineteenth century.
- *100 Briggs Farm (early/mid-18th century): The shingled, 2½-story, center-chimney farmhouse with a 3-bay facade and steep gable roof sits at the north end of a 104-acre parcel of land. The farm includes a wellhouse in front of the farmhouse, a barn to one side of the farmhouse, and the Briggs family cemetery southeast of the farmhouse. The house itself, with a large addition at its rear, retains an original paint scheme in one of the rooms on the second floor. The Briggs family was in Little Compton by the late 17th century, and many of its members are buried in the family cemetery on this property, including William Briggs

SHAW ROAD (continued)

(1650-1716), who may have built this house or a portion of it; the farm has remained in ownership of his descendants since the 18th century. While the farm's acreage and buildings recall the early agricultural history of Little Compton, the board-and-batten and shingled bath cottages (the earliest built in 1910) located at the south end of the property, near the ocean, speak to the recreational aspects of Little Compton summer life that have become increasingly important in the 20th century. This is an important, well-preserved property whose long history is closely associated with that of the town.

SIMMONS ROAD

- 6 Brownell Farm (18th century): The farmhouse in this complex is a shingled, gable-roof, center-chimney cottage with 12-over-12 and 8-over-8 windows. Outbuildings include a barn, a shed, and a 20th-century garage. George Brownell (1756-1831) lived here in the early 19th century; upon his death it passed to his son Ezra (1791-1879). Samuel S. Field bought the property in 1888, after Ezra Brownell's death, and it remained in the hands of his descendants until the 1970s. This modest complex is typical of the small-scale farms that inform the character of Little Compton.
- 17 Simmons House (late 18th century, early 20th century): A small, shingled cottage with a 3-bay facade, trellis-covered entrance on the east end of the facade, and a large shed dormer across the front. Built on West Main Road, this house was the birthplace of John Simmons, Boston manufacturer and benefactor of Simmons College. It was moved to this location in the twentieth century and has been much altered.
- 42 Benjamin Pierce Farm (ca. 1865): This complex includes a farmhouse and a small barn. The house is a 1 3/4-story dwelling with a center chimney, 5-bay facade, center entrance, and "eyebrow" windows in the attic directly above the windows and door on the facade; two ells, set back from the plane of the facade, flank the main block. This house is a typical, well-preserved mid-19th-century Little Compton dwelling. Benjamin Pierce (1822-1901) bought this property from Ezra Brownell (see 6 Simmons Road) in 1869; that deed mentions no buildings, but the 1865 census lists the Pierces living in this location.

SNELL ROAD

- 15 Wilbour-Mosher House (late 18th/early 19th century): A shingled, gable-roof cottage with a 5-bay facade, center entrance, 12-over-12 windows, and interior chimneys at each end of the building. This house has unusual, horizontal proportions with a "stretched" quality

SNELL ROAD (continued)

because of the wide spaces on either side of the pairs of windows that flank the entrance; remarkable, too, are the paired interior end chimneys, not commonly seen in such modest houses of this period and possibly later additions. Charles Wilbour owned this property in the early 19th century, but he may not have lived here. Michael Mosher bought the property for \$2,300 in 1853, and his heirs sold it in 1905, after his death.

- 50 Isaiah Snell Farm (ca. 1840?): A 31-acre farm with stone walls and a farmhouse. The farmhouse is a vernacular Greek Revival shingled cottage with a clapboard 4-bay facade; the off-center entrance, framed by sidelights, has a broad entablature. This is a simple structure typical of mid-19th-century farmhouses. Snell (1810-92) married in 1834 and may have built this house shortly thereafter. After his death, his son Brownell sold it to Gershom Wordell.
- 60 Snell Farm (early 19th century et seq.): Set at a curve in the road and surrounded by stone walls, this farm includes a farmhouse, barns, sheds, and corncrib. The somewhat altered farmhouse is a south-facing, shingled, center-chimney cottage with 8-over-12 sash. The Snell family owned several farms in this part of town; by the late nineteenth century, it belonged to Brownell Snell (1835-1907), who probably lived here after selling his father's nearby farm (see 50 Snell Road). This farm included forty acres in 1895.

SOUTH OF COMMONS ROAD

- **2 Wilbur's Store (early/mid-19th century, 1980): A small, 1½-story, clapboard building set gable end to the street with a center entrance flanked by plate-glass windows; two symmetrically placed 2-over-2 sash windows in the attic are partially obscured by a large, rectangular sign that reads "Est. of C. R. Wilbur/General Merchandise." A cloth awning protects the 1st story of the facade. This small building has grown over the years with 1-story, flat-roof additions to the north and east. A general store has been in this location since the early 19th century; Henry Walling's 1862 map indicates this building both as store and post office. Located at the eastern edge of the Commons (q. v.), Wilbur's Store, a town institution and gathering place, was heavily damaged by fire in 1980; it was immediately rebuilt and appears much as it always has.
- **4 Brownell-Bailey-Richmond House (early 19th century): A 2½-story clapboard dwelling with a 3-bay facade and off-center entrance with Greek Revival frame; on the 1st story is a handsome full-width, bracketed front porch, a late 19th-century addition. The earliest known owner of this property is Pardon Brownell, who sold it to George C. Richmond in 1832. When Isaac B. Richmond (see 59 South of Commons Road) acquired the property in 1854 it included the store next door (q. v.), and Walling's 1862 map shows this as the home of P. B. Richmond "Postmaster & dealer in Dry Goods, Groceries, Boots, Shoes." In the 20th century, this was the home of Ida Wilbur Smith, proprietor of Wilbur's Store.

SOUTH OF COMMONS ROAD (continued)

- 7 A. Wilbur House (late 18th/early 19th century): A clapboard, center-chimney cottage with a 5-bay facade and center entrance, it is set back from the road behind a low picket fence. Its early history is unknown, and tradition maintains that it was moved here from the corner at the Commons (see 2 Commons) before the house that stands there was constructed. This simple, vernacular cottage is typical of late 18- and early 19th-century Rhode Island houses.
- *12 William Wilbor House (ca. 1850): A 1½-story Greek Revival house with a 5-bay facade, center entrance framed by sidelights, full-width front porch with Roman Doric columns, lancet-arch windows in the gable ends, and paired interior chimneys. This house is particularly interesting for its combination of sources: Greek, the form and entrance detail; Roman, the columns; and Gothic, the lancet arch windows. This is one of at least two nearly identical houses built here in the mid-nineteenth century, probably by the same builder; the other, the Simmons-Manchester House at 106 Sakonnet Point Road, was extensively remodeled in the late nineteenth century. The house was standing by 1850, and William Wilbor lived here by 1862.
- *31 Seabury-Richmond-Burchard House (ca. 1840, mid-20th century): A clapboard, 2½-story dwelling with a 7-bay facade, projecting 1-story entrance pavilion, and 3 chimneys. This house evolved from a 5-bay-facade, center-entrance cottage, now the 2nd story of the north part of the building. This section was raised, a new 1st story was inserted under it, and a 2-story, 2-bay addition was added on the south side. The house is surrounded by extensive and well-trimmed gardens and fine trees. Captain Benjamin Seabury (1803-92) went to sea at age 12 and retired to Little Compton about 1840. He became a shopkeeper here and, in addition, served on the Town Council and in both houses of the state legislature. Joshua B. Richmond (see 59 South of Commons Road) bought the house from Seabury's heirs in 1915 and left it to his daughter Corinne Burchard (1881-1978) upon his death in 1931. His will refers to it as the "Seabury Cottage." Mrs. Burchard carried out the extensive renovations; like many individuals in the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, she chose to do over an old house in Georgian Revival style. These high-quality renovations are significant in and of themselves, for they make this house important for an understanding of 20th-century taste.
- *35 "Seaborn Mary" House (ca. 1730, 1937): A shingled, gambrel-roof cottage with a large center chimney, asymmetrical facade, and 9-over-9 windows. Built in Londonderry, New Hampshire, this house was moved here in 1937 and restored as a vacation house for members of the Richmond family.
- 43 Ralph S. Richmond House (ca. 1930, ca. 1946): The original section of this house is the 1½-story, gambrel-roof portion with shed dormers; the 2-story addition dates to 1946. The design of this house was based on that of a colonial house in Milton, Massachusetts; like the houses nearby at numbers 31 and 35 South of Commons Road (q. v.), this was built as a vacation house for a member of the Richmond family, whose family seat is nearby at 59 South of Commons Road.

SOUTH OF COMMONS ROAD (continued)

- 54 Joseph Brownell House (ca. 1860): A typical mid-19th-century rural dwelling, 1 3/4 stories high with a 5-bay facade, bracketed entrance with sidelights and transom light, "eyebrow" windows in the frieze above the 1st-story windows, paired interior end chimneys, and a 1-story ell on the south side set well back from the plane of the facade. James Brownell (1789-1868) and his son Joseph (1827-93) inherited some 30 acres, then referred to as the "Wilbur Land," from Pardon Brownell (1785-1836), James's brother. In 1859, James transferred his interest in the property to Joseph, who probably built this house soon thereafter. The land remained undivided until 1964.
- *59 Isaac Bailey Richmond House (ca.1830, ca. 1890, et seq.): A large, rambling, clapboard house. The 2½-story, main block has a 5-bay facade with a center entrance with sidelights set within a full-width, parapet-capped, 1-story front porch and a complex, 2-level cupola-and-dormer arrangement; on the north of the main block is a large, 2½-story ell. Facing south across rolling open fields, this handsome dwelling is set within a well landscaped setting, surrounded by extensive gardens, shade trees, winding drives, and outbuildings, which include a barn, stables, and sheds. Isaac Richmond (1798-1888) was apprenticed in 1812 to John Holden Greene, Providence's master builder-architect; his neighbor and near contemporary John Church (see 420 West Main Road) accompanied him. He went with Greene to Savannah in 1817-19 to work on the Independent Presbyterian Church and remained there as a builder for some 20 years, returning seasonally to Little Compton, where he eventually settled in the late 1830s. Richmond acquired this property in 1828 and probably worked on its construction for several years thereafter. Upon his death, the house passed to his son Joshua Bailey Richmond (1843-1931), an importer, manufacturer, and sugar refiner who lived on Beacon Street in Boston. Joshua Richmond retired in 1890 and soon after transformed his father's working farm into a handsome country estate. In the early years of the 20th century, Richmond began to acquire land around the family seat, and his children built their own vacation houses on these parcels (see 31, 35, and 43 South of Commons Road). This ample complex well illustrates two important phases in Little Compton's history: its early agricultural phase and its late 19th-century flourishing as a summer vacation retreat.
- *60 Malachi Grinnell House (mid-18th century, 1948): A shingled, 2½-story, 3-bay facade dwelling with 1½- and 1-story ells set back from the main block at the northeast corner; it has two interior chimneys, at the northeast and southwest of the main block, and the off-center entrance has a Greek Revival frame with sidelights and a frieze. The 2½-story, "half-house" form is relatively rare in 18th-century Little Compton houses. Malachi Grinnell (1737-80) was living here before the Revolution; after his death, his widow was forced to sell the property "to pay the debts that have accrued in bringing up the children." Her son Owen bought the property, and it remained in the hands of his heirs or collateral kinsmen until 1860. Blanche Borden Frenning (see 316 West Main Road) designed the addition to the original main block.
- 128 Cornelius Brownell House (ca. 1845): A 1½-story Greek Revival house with a 5-bay facade, center entrance with sidelights and a wide frieze,

SOUTH OF COMMONS ROAD (continued)

narrow "eyebrow" windows in the entablature over the 1st-story windows, and paired interior chimneys; at the east side of the house is a 1½-story ell with a full-width front porch set back from the plane of the facade. Handsome stone walls line the property. Brownell (1821-99) married Frances Brown Almy (1824-1907) in 1842; he probably built this house soon thereafter; he was living here by 1850.

SOUTH SHORE ROAD

- 97 Sisson Farm (late 18th/early 19th century et seq.): This complex includes a shingled farmhouse and garage, a shed, a stone barn, and stone walls. The 2½-story farmhouse has a large center chimney, 5-bay facade, center entrance with fanlight, and 12-over-12 windows; the full-width, hip-roof front porch, with shingled knee walls and piers, is an early 20th-century addition. Deeds refer to this as the "John Sisson [1846-1913] Homestead;" he may have inherited this farm, which in the 19th century included some 63 acres, from his father, Joseph Sisson (1801-76). John Sisson's son William (1871-1936) was a dairy farmer who occupied the farm beginning in 1909 and made improvements to it (he is probably responsible for the front porch); he inherited the property upon his father's death.
- 125 Round Meadows (mid-20th century): This summer beach cottage colony is made up of a number of small, insubstantial summer cottages informally grouped about a central green with a common bathhouse and water facilities. Located adjacent to Tunipus Beach (q. v.), the town beach, this colony of architecturally undistinguished seasonal dwellings is nonetheless important as a typical seaside development found in nearly every Atlantic coast community.
- 140 Tunipus Beach (early/mid-20th century): A pebbly beach facing the Atlantic Ocean with several small structures associated with beaches, including changing rooms and lifeguard stations. Tunipus Beach is the town beach and the only public beach in Little Compton.

STONE CHURCH ROAD

- 40 "Sheffield Barn" (18th century?): Two-story-high, uncoursed random ashlar walls with openings for fenestration (irregular but symmetrical on the side visible from the road) are all that remain of this extremely large stone barn; its high hip roof collapsed in the 1970s. This is the largest stone barn still standing in Little Compton, and its scale is remarkable in a statewide context. William Sheffield owned the barn in the late 19th century.
- 75 Joseph C. Peckham House (ca. 1894-95): A handsome 1 3/4-story, cross-gable roof house with an inset front porch, bay windows, and shingles in four different patterns. At the rear of the house is a little-altered barn/carriage house with sliding paneled doors in front. Peckham (1848-95) was a carriage maker who died suddenly of pneumonia just after this house was completed; David A. Coggeshall

STONE CHURCH ROAD (continued)

bought the house for \$1,325 at the estate auction in September of 1895 and sold it a year and a half later to Frederick J. Sylvia.

SWAMP ROAD

- 66 "Marshside," the Dr. Franklin C. Southworth House (1921, 1929-30): Albert Harkness, architect; Sidney and Arthur Shurcliff, landscape architects. High on a hill overlooking the marshes of Awashonks Pond the shingled, 2-story, L-plan, cross-gable-roof dwelling with a 1-story ell was built in two stages: the one-story eastern part first; the 2-story western part second. The simple, vernacular-inspired neo-colonial house became increasingly important as a summer-residence type in 20th-century Little Compton. Harkness did a similar house, built at the same time and also in two stages, for William P. Buffum at 44 Round Pond Road (q.v.). The recollection of early Little Compton houses was probably quite desirable for Dr. Southworth, the head of Meadville Theological School, who purchased this land, originally allocated in the 17th century to his ancestor Constant Southworth; the land passed out of Southworth ownership in the early 19th century.
- 160 Robert J. Higgins House (1983-84): William J. Underwood, architect. A well-designed, 1½-story, shingled dwelling with regular, ample fenestration, particularly on the south side of the house; a small shed, perpendicular to the axis of the house, is to its northeast. This simple design effectively uses modern forms and proportions within the context of the Little Compton vernacular: it is at once lively and new, as well as part of the strong visual continuum of Little Compton architecture. Higgins, a Providence banker, built this as a summer residence.

TAYLOR'S LANE

- *11 William or Jonathan Taylor Homestead (late 18th or early 19th century): A small, shingled cottage with a center chimney, 4-bay facade, and 1-story ell at the northwest corner; the off-center entrance is framed with sidelights. Jonathan Taylor (1753-1809) received this property from his father, William (1724-1810), and it is unclear whether William lived here. The house devolved through Jonathan's daughter to his grandson Thomas Wilbour (1818-75) and changed hands several times after Mrs. Thomas Wilbour died in 1895. In 1922 Wilbour's second cousin twice removed Caroline Patten Jackson, a resident of Brookline, Massachusetts, bought the property as a summer residence.
- *22 Benjamin Harris House (1923-24, mid-1930s): Benjamin Harris, architect. A large, rambling, shingled house with a symmetrical main block flanked by ells parallel with the axis of the main house at the northeast and southwest. The main block has a 5-bay facade with a center entrance under an elliptical fanlight set within a trellised porch; a high, 2-story roof that sweeps around a prominent shed dormer; and two large chimneys. The principal outbuilding is a shingled, 1-story

TAYLOR'S LANE (continued)

guest house built in the mid-1930s. Mr. Harris, who studied architecture at the University of Berlin, designed this house for his own use, and it remained in his family until the early 1980s. Its picturesque combination of the vernacular of rural England, noticeable in the building's massing and roof form, and the allusions to "colonial" sources, particularly in the treatment of the entrance, is typical of mainstream suburban/resort domestic architecture of the 1920s and 1930s.

- *28 Wood-Wilbour House (late 18th century et seq.): The original section of this shingled house is a south-facing, 1½-story, center-chimney block with a center entrance in a 5-bay facade, now capped with a large shed-roof dormer; the rambling 1½- and 2-story ell to the rear was built in several campaigns. Jonathan Wood was living here on the eve of the Revolution, but Isaac Champlin Wilbour (1831-99) owned the property by the mid-19th century. Like other early rural houses, this has grown randomly into a handsome, picturesque composition; its appearance in many ways typifies the collective architectural aesthetic of Little Compton.
- *37A Wood-Peckham-Ropes House (18th century? et seq.): A 1½-story, painted shingle house with a 1-story ell projecting from the facade on the southwest corner. The 8-bay facade of the main block is the product of at least two building campaigns: the original section was probably a 5-bay facade, center entrance block, later extended 3 bays to the west. The 3 symmetrically placed dormers are probably 20th-century additions. George Wood (1730-1820) lived here in the 18th century—possibly in another house—and left the property to his son John, about whom little is known; the house devolved in the 19th century to Nathaniel Church (1801-82), who successively married two of Wood's granddaughters. Cyrus Peckham owned the property in the mid-19th century, and it passed in 1887 to Ripley Ropes, who had extensive property holdings in this part of town.
- *41 H. R. Merriman House (1938): Edwin Emory Cull, architect. A large, rambling, asymmetrical 2-story house faced in stone and wood shingles; its high hip roof is intersected by the gable roof of the wing on the front and the gambrel roof of the ell on the rear. Windows are banded on the 1st story and grouped or in wall dormers on the 2nd story. This picturesque dwelling recalls French and English rural vernacular houses, a popular source for suburban and country houses in the 1920s and 1930s. Merriman was an investment broker when he built this as a summer house.
- *50 Richmond-Howe House (ca. 1918, ca. 1934): An ample, 1½-story, shingled, gambrel-roof dwelling with a 4-bay facade and small ell on the north end; the off-center entrance is flanked by pilasters which support a pediment that breaks the cornice above the 1st story. Built in emulation of the gambrel-roof colonial cottages of 18th-century rural Rhode Island, this house has the breadth of scale typical of Colonial Revival houses of the first two decades of the 20th century. Mr. and Mrs. Knight Richmond built the house; he was an architect and engineer and may well have designed this himself. Ruth S. Howe bought the house in 1933 and immediately remodeled it into its present

TAYLOR'S LANE (continued)

form. The original playhouse east of the house has grown by stages into a guest house.

- *77B Edward S. Cole House (ca. 1929): Edwin Howard (Westport, Connecticut), architect. A 2-story, splayed-V-plan, shingled neo-colonial house with a cross-hip and salt-box roof and entrance at the interior intersection of the two wings. Built as a summer house, this fully exploits two popular aesthetic themes of early 20th-century architecture, the "colonial" and the picturesque. The architect for this house was later the architect for the Shakespeare Theatre—a simulacrum of the 16th-century Globe in London—built in Stratford, Connecticut: the Cole House suggests the emerging relationship between buildings and stage sets during the 1920s and 1930s, when allusionism became an important concept in architectural design.

TAYLOR'S LANE SOUTH

- 20 Harold K. Barrows House (1934-35): A rambling, 1½-story, staggered-cross-plan, neo-colonial shingled cottage with a complex gable roof and large brick center chimney. The picturesque asymmetry of this 20th-century house's form simulates that of 18th-century houses that gradually accrued additions over time, like the Wood-Wilbour House at 28 Taylor's Lane (q. v.). Barrows built this as a summer house.
- *23 Daniel Drake-Smith House (1928-29): Edwin Emory Cull, architect. A superb large, sprawling, shingled house masterfully disguised as a picturesque cottage. The F-plan house has a high hip roof on the main block—the upper portion of the F—intersected by cross gables and a lower hip roof over the service wing and garages—the tail of the F; dormers sprout from the roofs of all sections. A low picket fence encloses the space in front of the main block. On the rear of the house is a glazed sun porch with a sweeping view of the Sakonnet River and Rhode Island Sound. Built as a year-round residence, the Drake-Smith House epitomizes the concept of pretty picturesqueness that dominated the American domestic architectural scene during the 1920s and 1930s; there are many of these in Little Compton, and this is one of the very best.
- 24 George Frost House (1939-40): A shingled, center-chimney, neo-colonial cottage with ells splayed off the main block; the central section has a 5-bay facade and center entrance framed by fluted pilasters. This house, like many of the 1930s and 1940s, takes its inspiration from cottages of rural 18th-century New England. In 1939, Frost bought this property from Daniel Drake-Smith (see 23 Taylor's Lane South) with the restrictions that use be only residential and that the house cost a minimum of \$5,000; he built this summer house soon thereafter.

TOWN ROAD

- 1 "Wind Mill Hill Farm," the Sanford Almy House (late 18th century et seq.): A south-facing, 2½-story, shingled house with two sections: a 3-bay-facade, side-hall-plan, center-chimney main block and a slightly

TOWN ROAD (continued)

smaller ell set back from the plane of the facade on the east side; a mid-19th-century bay window is on the front of the ell. The entrance is framed by sidelights. Sanford Almy (1759-1844) farmed here in the late 18th century; he left this, designated in his will as the "homestead farm," to his son John Edwin Almy (1807-71), and it remained in Almy ownership until 1918. The form of this house is unusual: few 3-bay-facade, center-chimney, side-hall-plan houses stand in Little Compton.

TREATY ROCK ROAD

50 Treaty Rock Farmhouse (ca. 1865): A 2½-story dwelling with a 5-bay facade, center entrance within a 1-story pedimented porch (probably of 20th-century origin), paired interior chimneys, a wraparound porch on the south and west sides, and a 1 3/4-story ell set back from the plane of the facade at the northwest corner. Built by William H. Chase in the mid-19th century, this house replaced a 17th-century house on the site destroyed by fire. The land surrounding this house was settled in the 17th century by John Richmond (1594-1664); he quit Little Compton for South County, where the town of Richmond bears his name. His family lived here until the late 20th century. The farmland around the house, though still in agricultural use, has been separated from the house. The farm takes its name from the nearby Treaty Rock (q. v.).

*60 Treaty Rock: A natural rock outcropping marks the spot traditionally believed to be the location of the signing of the 1676 peace pact between the Sakonnet Indians and Colonel Benjamin Church. Places like this—Plymouth Rock is perhaps the best known example—acquire a mythic aura in popular American culture being, as they literally are, touchstones to the permanent European settlement of the western hemisphere.

WARREN'S POINT ROAD

*49 William G. Nightingale House (1950): Albert Harkness, architect. A 2-story, natural-wood-clapboard-clad house with a complex gable roof, grid windows, and a 2-story, louver-and-trellis porch across the front of the house, which faces east across meadows toward the Atlantic Ocean. Like other "modern" houses that Harkness designed in the 1940s (e. g. the Almet Jenkes House, also on Warren's Point Road [q. v.]), this design emphasizes orientation to the site and functional organization of space—both considered critical to good design at the time—but minimizes the striking new forms so widely embraced, particularly in the professional architectural press. Nightingale was an insurance agent who lived in Providence when he built this as a vacation house.

* World War II Fortifications (1940): Two reinforced-concrete bunker-type gun emplacements for 6-inch guns. Little Compton's fine views of the Atlantic Ocean, long admired by summer visitors, attracted the attention of the United States War Department on the eve of World War II, when these were built as part of the country's coastal defense

WARREN'S POINT ROAD (continued)

system. A related installation is Fort Church (see 665B West Main Road).

- *64 Almet Jenkes House (1949): Albert Harkness, architect. A rambling, 1½- and 2-story shingled house with a spreading gable roof, large stone chimneys on the north and west, and a rectilinear Z plan: the main axis of the Z runs east-west, and the southwest portion of the building is a large greenhouse. The 2-story section on the northeast is a recent addition. The windows are arranged in bands or—as on the east elevations—in large, rectangular grids. A small, hip-roof pavilion southeast of the main house and on axis with it partially encloses the small terrace within the angle of the Z. Handsome, dry-laid stone walls bound this well-landscaped property. Assembled from portions of old farm buildings—a stable and a greenhouse—as a vacation house, this is a fine example of the "progressive design" that began to dominate domestic architecture during the years immediately following World War II.
- *65 Thomas Marvell House (1940): Thomas Marvell, architect. A handsome modernist house of connected pavilions built of vertical and horizontal flushboard with wide horizontal picture and banded-case-ment windows and shed roofs of various heights. The pavilions sit slightly above the ground on concrete piers: this "floating" appearance and the taut flatness of the buildings themselves reinforce the new vision of architecture that informs the complex's design, very much a product of the International Style philosophy then predominant at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. Marvell (1913-83) designed and built this summer house—on land owned by his wife's family, the Truesdales—soon after completing his training at the Graduate School of Design. The earliest modernist house in Little Compton, it is a striking composition and, when built, was—not surprisingly—highly controversial.

WASHINGTON ROAD

- 48 "Seaconnet Point Farm," the Carl W. Haffenreffer Estate (late 19th century, 1957 et seq.): Robinson, Greene & Beretta, architects; Hedeo Sasaki, landscape architect. The main house in this large complex is a spreading, 1-story, hip-roof, vertical-board-sided, modern house. Outbuildings include a carriage house, barn, greenhouse, and 3 guest houses. Haffenreffer, a principal in Narragansett Brewery, lived in Providence and assembled this parcel, located at what is reputed to be the summer camp of Queen Awashonks: the western portion of the property belonged to the Lloyd family (see Bailey's Ledge) from the late 19th century through the mid-20th centuries; during World War II, the eastern portion of it was part of the War Department's system of coastal fortifications (see also Warren's Point Road and 665B West Main Road). The Haffenreffers took down the old Lloyd house, re-arranged some of the outbuildings, and built the present main house. Located at the southwesternmost tip of the town as it juts into Rhode Island Sound, the handsome, well-designed, spectacularly sited main house has magnificent views to the east, south, and west.

WEST MAIN ROAD

- 116 Woodman Cemetery (1710 et seq.): A small family cemetery, some 25 feet wide by 85 feet deep, enclosed by a 2½-foot dry-laid stone wall; 2 granite piers flank the entrance centered on the south side. The burying ground of the family that lived nearby (see 120 West Main Road), this simple, well maintained cemetery is one of several remaining in Little Compton.
- 120 Woodman Farm (19th century): The farmhouse is a south-facing, 2½-story, shingled house with a 5-bay facade, center entrance within a 1-story (probably 20th-century) porch, 1½-story ell on the east, and 1-story porch on the west. Farm buildings include barns and sheds. The complex sits amid stone-wall-lined fields east of the road. This farm belonged to Humphrey Woodman in the 1st half of the 19th century; the presence nearby of his family's cemetery, with stones dating to the early 18th century, suggests that the Woodmans settled here early in the town's history. As late as the 1930s, the farm comprised over 200 acres.
- 162 Sakonnet Vineyards (1975 et seq.): A pioneer in the burgeoning New England wine business, this 125-acre farm was the first of Rhode Island's late 20th-century vineyards. James A. and Lloyd McD. Mitchell selected this property in 1974 for its temperateness and climatic similarity to wine-growing regions in France and Germany. The first planting occurred in the spring of 1975, and wine production, aided by the purchase of New York grapes, followed soon after. The vineyard, which grows both hybrid and vinifer grapes, produces a growing range of estate-bottled varietal wines. The wine industry is the latest development in Little Compton's long agricultural history.
- *191 "Red Feather Farm," the Almy Farm (mid-/late 18th century): A shingled, 2½-story, center chimney house with a 5-bay facade, center entrance (whose delicately leaded transom light belongs more to the early 19th century than to the time the house was built), and ell at the rear; the relatively narrow windows have 6-over-6 and 9-over-9 sash. Sited near the road, this is a handsome, typical early Little Compton farmhouse. Sanford Almy (1759-1844) left this farm to his son Oliver (1790-1873), and it remained in Almy family ownership until 1947.
- *193 Barn (18th century?): An ample, random-ashlar building with a shingled gable roof, large central loading bay flanked by two doors, and shed-roof ells on either side. This barn appears to be one of the earlier agricultural buildings remaining in Little Compton. In the late 19th century, it housed a dairy farm operated by Rufus Peckham and his brother Albert (see 200 West Main Road).
- 200 Albert Peckham House (ca. 1865?): A large, vernacular, staggered-cross-plan, mid-19th-century farmhouse with a 3-bay facade and wraparound front porch. The house connects at rear with a sprawling network of greenhouses. Albert Peckham (1840-1906) came to Little Compton from Middletown and with other members of his family operated one of the largest and most successful farms in town; it stretched from the Sakonnet River to Burchard Avenue and produced dairy products, produce, and flowers (see also 193 West Main Road). The hothouses were first installed in the late 19th century, and the

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

- Peckham family, who still owns this property, continued to operate a truck farm into the 1960s; since then, the business has concentrated on plants and flowers.
- 211 Rufus B. Peckham House (ca. 1925, 1946): A highly picturesque, shingled, L-plan cottage assembled from buildings erected earlier on the site. This was the homestead site of John Irish, one of Little Compton's original settlers. Peckham used a portion of the Irish house for the southeast section of the house and the barn for the center section; the breezeway and garage to the north were added in 1946. This fine house partakes in two important trends in early 20th-century Little Compton domestic architecture: the combining and/or substantial rebuilding of earlier buildings and the creation of designs of storybook-like prettiness.
- *228 John Hunt Farm (mid-/late 18th century): A very fine and well preserved house is the centerpiece of this farm, which includes a signally intact group of 19th- and 20th-century outbuildings and still-cultivated acreage. The shingled, 2½-story farmhouse has a 5-bay facade, center entrance with transom light, 2 brick end chimneys, and a large ell at the rear. Outbuildings include a handsome stone barn, large shingled garage, corn crib, and sheds—all east of the house—and a paddock north of the house. John Hunt (1730-88) is the earliest member of the Hunt family known to have lived here, and he probably built the farmhouse. The property has always remained in the hands of his descendants: his great-great-great-grandson Robert Snow acquired it in 1927. This complex is remarkable for its integrity of architecture and setting.
- *234 Friends Meeting House (1815): A plain, shingled building, 2 stories high with a symmetrical 4-bay facade, 2 off-center entrances, and paired interior end chimneys. Quakers in Little Compton formed a Meeting in 1700, assisted by Friends in Dartmouth and Portsmouth; the first meetinghouse stood on this site, and portions of it were incorporated into this building. The last Quaker in Little Compton died in 1903, and the meetinghouse fell into disrepair. It was refurbished in 1925; in 1947 the Westport Monthly Meeting gave the building to the Little Compton Historical Society, which restored it in 1960. The form of this serenely simple building reflects the ideals of Friendly worship; the two entrances and the divisibility of the interior accommodates the segregation of sexes during Meeting. This is probably the only Quaker meetinghouse built in rural Rhode Island in the 19th century, a time when that denomination's strength was waning. That the Little Compton Quakers elected to build a new meetinghouse at this time suggests that the movement was still vigorous here; when other groups still continued to gravitate toward the Commons, the Quakers chose to remain at this spot on West Main Road, probably because of the number of meeting members living nearby.
- 241 Grinnell Farm-Newton Estate (late 18th century, 1916-28): Fletcher Steele, landscape architect. An 18th-century farmhouse is the oldest part of this complex, most of which dates to the early 20th century. The 2-story, center-chimney, shingled farmhouse with an asymmetrical facade forms the north wing of the house; the south wing, designed in

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

the French country-house mode so popular in the 1920s, is a 2½-story, random-course ashlar building with a high-hip roof and grouped windows. Outbuildings include a carriage house, barn, cottage, and sheds. Billings Grinnell (1749-1815) lived here in the late 18th century and probably built the house. The property remained in Grinnell family ownership until Mr. and Mrs. J. Edward Newman bought it in 1909; Newman was a New Bedford mill owner. The Newmans improved the property substantially between 1916 and 1928, when the tax valuation of the buildings here increased from \$4,000 to \$26,000. The picturesque farm village they created resembles those—both genuine and reproduction—regularly illustrated in architectural magazines of the day.

- 269 Howland House (late 18th/early 19th century): A wide, shallow, 2½-story, shingled house with a center chimney, slightly asymmetrical 5-bay facade, and center entrance under a 5-light transom window. In the 19th century, this belonged to John Borden Howland (1804-1871) and his son Edward W. Howland (1833-1903), a farmer most often remembered as the last Quaker in Little Compton. Edward Howland's farm was the largest in late nineteenth-century Little Compton: in 1895 it included 500 acres.
- 270 Number 4 School (ca. 1845, ca. 1958): A small, 1-story shingled (originally clapboard) building set gable end to the road with a 3-bay facade, center entrance flanked by 6-over-6 windows; a lunette window is centered in the attic over the entrance. Two small additions are at the rear. The town was divided into 10 school districts in 1844, and new buildings for all were soon constructed. After the opening in 1929 of the Josephine F. Wilbour School at 28 Commons, this school became redundant. Mr. and Mrs. Clayton Lester bought the property in 1857 and converted it to residential use.
- 301 Marion Sherer House (ca. 1927): A large, spreading shingled house done in the neo-colonial mode of the 1920s; it has a wide, 6-bay facade with French doors, an off-center entrance within a small, 1-story porch, and an ell at rear. Outbuildings include a multiple-port garage, guest house, and barn. Large country houses of the 1920s and 1930s were often done up with very simple exterior treatments—here, rudimentarily "colonial"—that often belie their elaborately programmed interiors. This house replaces an older house on the site owned by the Osburn family, Mrs. Sherer's forebears. She and her husband took down the old house and erected this in its stead.
- *311 David White Farm (ca. 1840?): This property includes a handsome farmhouse and barn. The house is a 1 3/4-story Greek Revival dwelling with a 5-bay facade, center entrance with sidelights and a wide entablature, "eyebrow" windows in the entablature above the 1st story, and paired interior chimneys; there is a 1 story ell, set back from the plane of the facade behind a full-width porch, on the south side and an early 20th-century glazed porch on the northwest corner. The 2-story barn, just west of the house, is partially of random-course ashlar and partially clad with weathered wood shingles. This small complex is remarkable both for its quality and its integrity. David White (1799-1849) built this farm, probably within a decade of his death. It

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

remained in his family's possession until 1896.

- *316 "Bumble Bee Farm," the Frenning House (1938-40): Blanche Borden Frenning, designer/architect. A large, shingled, 2½-story, neo-colonial saltbox house patterned after 17th-century models. It has a large center chimney, narrow windows, an overhanging 2nd story on the facade, and an ell at the rear; portions of the interior incorporate, in whole or in part, rooms from seventeenth- and eighteenth-century buildings and structures. Outbuildings include a well in the dooryard, a rustic carriage house with wide, uneven clapboards, and a garage with attached sheds. Located at the end of a long, private drive, this complex sits on a manicured lawn amid gardens created along previously standing stone walls and overlooks marshes toward the south, where the spire of the Congregational Church on the Commons is a prominent landmark. Built by a designer as her country retreat, this highly picturesque house consciously evokes the forms of Little Compton's first houses and fully realizes the revivalist ideals of mainstream American domestic architecture of the early twentieth century. The garden, a sequence of outdoor rooms, exemplifies mid-20th-century Colonial Revival gardens.
- 335 William Brown House (late 18th century): A shingled, 2½-story, center-chimney dwelling with a 5-bay facade and center entrance framed by sidelights and capped by a broad entablature. Brown (1727-1792) was a farmer, and as late as the mid-20th century this property included a small tool house, a barn, and a well. The house devolved in the Brown family until its sale in 1951 by his great-great-great-granddaughter.
- 356 The Country Stand (1953, 1959 et seq.): A 1-story, wood-frame building with a shed roof and open front. Roadside produce stands are an important element in the rural New England landscape. They serve—particularly in fertile areas like Little Compton—as distribution centers for local produce and reinforce the image of traditional New England. The Burchard family (see 420 West Main Road) owned this property and leased it to Edward Madeiros, who sold produce he raised across the road at Treaty Rock Farm (see 50 Treaty Rock Road). The small, original stand (1953), visited by President Eisenhower in 1958, at rear was replaced by the larger stand (1959); it has been expanded and remodeled several times.
- 382 House (ca. 1925): A large Colonial Revival dwelling typical of the 1920s: 2½ stories high, the painted-shingled house has a saltbox roof and a symmetrical facade flanked by 1-story porches, both now enclosed; the entrance is centered on the facade, within a 1-story pedimented porch, and flanked by sash windows banded in groups of three. This replaced an earlier house on the site.
- 401 Frederick Brownell House (ca. 1900, ca. 1928): A shingled, L-plan, cross-gable-roof cottage with a shed-roof front porch. Originally a large corn crib, this was moved to this site in the late 1920s and converted for residential use. The remodeling of agricultural structures into houses became increasingly common in the early 20th century.

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

- *411 Brownell Farm (1804): A well-tended, handsomely sited, clapboard-and-shingle, Federal house 2½ stories high with a 5-bay facade, 12-over-12 sash windows, and large ell at the rear; the center entrance below a semi-circular pediment is set within a 1-story pedimented porch. Outbuildings include a barn and shed, and the property is surrounded by handsome dry-laid stone walls. This property remains in the hands of the builder's descendants.
- *420 "Old Acre," the Church-Burchard House (ca. 1841, ca. 1890): A large, elaborate, and handsome Colonial Revival house 2½ stories high with a full-width, 1-story porch—pedimented over the center entrance—across the front; Chinese Chippendale balustrades on the roof; and broad, deep, projecting bow windows on the principal elevations. At rear is a Colonial Revival barn (see 62 Meeting House Lane). John Church (1794-1882) was a builder who began his career with Providence architect-builder John Holden Greene in 1812, the same year that Greene apprenticed Church's neighbor and near contemporary Isaac B. Richmond (see 59 South of Commons Road). Church later formed the contracting firm Church & Sweet, active in Providence and responsible for buildings in Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina. He retired to Little Compton in 1840 and built this house soon after. His son John (1834-1890) became rich in the music business; upon his death, his daughter and sole heir, Edith Russell Church (1868-1942) inherited his estate. She undertook the extensive remodeling of her grandfather's house, cutting it in half and installing the wide center hall in addition to dressing it up in the Colonial Revival mode just emerging as the height of fashion and taste in the early 1890s. In 1897, she married Roswell Burchard (1860-1931), who served as Speaker of the Rhode Island House of Representatives (1907-11) and Lieutenant Governor of Rhode Island (1913-15). This complex is one of the finest Colonial Revival country seats in the state.
- *438 Simmons-Wood-Palmer House (mid-/late 18th century?, early 19th century): A 2½-story shingled house with a center-chimney ell at rear; it has a 5-bay facade with center entrance framed by sidelights. The rear of this house is probably the older section, and may have been built by Adam Simmons (1733-1803); his widow, Deborah Church Simmons (1736-1826) owned it until the time of her death. It passed to her grandson Charles Wood (1781-1850), and the front portion may have been built sometime during his tenure. Wood's son Charles H. Wood (1817-1877) sold it to Elkanah Palmer (1797-1881) in 1876, and it remained in Palmer family ownership until 1907.
- 450 Simmons Farm (early 19th century?): A 2½-story, shingled house with a 4-bay facade and interior end chimneys; the off-center entrance is under a 5-light transom window. Outbuildings include a barn and a shed. In the mid-19th century, this farm belonged to Lindall Simmons (1783-1866), the grand-nephew of Adam Simmons (see 438 West Main Road), whose farm was just north of here. Both farms were owned by members of the Simmons family through much of the 19th century, but who lived where remains obscure.
- 441 William A. Phillips House (1936): Albert Harkness, architect. A large, rambling country house in the Georgian Revival mode: at its heart is

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

a symmetrical, brick-clad, 2½-story, center-chimney section with a 5-bay facade with pedimented center entrance, and lower, asymmetrical, flanking wings. Phillips, who lived in Gladstone, New Jersey, bought the extensive property around this house in 3 separate transactions and hired one of the state's leading architects to design his summer house; the choice of architect must have been relatively simple, for Harkness had designed a house for Abbott Phillips, William's brother, in Providence and probably designed both of the Abbott Phillipses' country houses in Little Compton, at 10 Old West Main Road and 97 Round Pond Road (q. v.).

- *466 Church Farm (late 18th century): A barn and a south-facing house remain of this old farm complex. The house is a shingled, 2½-story, 5-bay-facade, center-chimney dwelling with a center entrance capped by a 5-light transom window and a pediment; there is an open porch on the west side and a large ell at the rear. This is a typical, rural Rhode Island farmhouse. Nathanael Church (1801-1882) inherited this property from his father, Joseph (1764-1840), and it may well have been built by his grandfather Ebenezer (1725-1825); probate records also suggest that it was at one time owned by Joseph's brother Nathaniel (1769-1859). Farmed for much of the 19th century, it became a summer house in the early 20th century when bought by Philip B. Simonds, a Providence businessman.
- *500 Burgess-Saloman House (mid-19th century, 1920s): A much enlarged and embellished vernacular farmhouse. The original portion of the house is the north-facing front: it is a shingled, 1½-story structure with a 4-bay facade and off-center entrance with a transom light. In the 19th century, it belonged to Thomas Burgess (1822-1881). Henry Saloman, a Providence investment broker, bought the property in 1919, and during the 1920s the Salomans transformed this from a modest farmhouse into a substantial country seat, adding the 2-story, shingled addition—much larger than the original section—on the south side with ample, shaded terraces and French doors on the west side. Set amid extensive and well tended gardens, it presents the very image of leisurely country living as perceived in the early 20th century.
- *510 Saloman-Hibbard House (mid-19th century, mid-1920s, mid-1950s): A small, picturesque, shingled cottage built in several sections over several periods. It began as an ancillary structure to the Burgess House (q. v.) to the north, and was converted for use as a guest house by the Salomans in the 1920s. Charles L. Hibbard, an architect from Milton, Massachusetts, assembled this property by 1951 and moved the building to this site; the original section on the east was expanded to the west with a wing and an attached garage. The conversion of old farm buildings became increasingly popular in the northeast during the 20th century as its agricultural economy declined.
- *521 Peabody-Wilbour Farm (ca. 1680, 18th century?, ca. 1880): This large, rambling house includes a section dating from the late 17th or early 18th century, when William and Elizabeth Peabody lived here. Later construction during the 19th century—when it belonged to Governor Isaac Wilbour (1763-1837) and his heirs—produced its present form. The house is a 2½-story, clapboard house with a 5-bay facade, center

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

entrance within a medievalizing 1-story porch, wide bay windows flanking the entrance, interior end chimneys, and an octagonal cupola centered on the roof; on the west side is an ell, slightly lower than and set back from the facade of the main block. Audrey Parsons, a designer from New York, bought the property for use as a vacation house, from Wilbour's great-great granddaughter Dorothy Martin in 1940.

- *531 Arlene Smith House (1938): Peter Geddes, architect. A shingled modern-cum-colonial house with a 2-story main block flanked by 1-story wings, the northern one a garage. The off-center entrance is framed by a trellis, and the small-pane sash windows have shutters. This very simple house has that characteristic 1930s blend of modernist proportions and colonial forms and detail; the architect designed a number of modernist buildings in the 1930s, and this work was published in national architectural magazines. Mrs. Smith was a national women's fencing champion.
- *541 Dora Wilbour Patten House (1908-09): A large, high-shouldered Colonial Revival house $2\frac{1}{2}$ stories high with a 5-bay facade; pedimented, projecting center pavilion with Palladian window on the 2nd story; center entrance with semi-elliptical fanlight and sidelights within a 1-story porch; and porches flanking the main block of the house, the one on the west open, that on the east glazed (and recently expanded with an inappropriate greenhouse addition). This is a fine representative of the first generation of Colonial Revival houses, built generally between 1890 and 1910. Mrs. Patten (1864-1950) built this on land that had long belonged to her family, the Wilbours.
- *548 Wilbour House, now the Little Compton Historical Society (1690 et seq.): A $2\frac{1}{2}$ -story, weathered clapboard-and-shingle-house with a large center chimney and ell at the rear; the center entrance in the asymmetrical 4-bay facade has a transom light, and the windows in the eastern half of the house are considerably smaller than those on the west. Samuel Wilbore (1664-1740) came to Little Compton in the late 17th century and built the eastern half of this house, including the ell; his descendants added the western portion of the house in the 18th century. The house remained in Wilbour (the spelling of the name varies) family ownership until 1919. The Little Compton Historical Society acquired the house in 1955 and undertook its careful restoration as a museum house, a project overseen by local historian Carlton Brownell. In addition to the house, the complex, surrounded by stone walls, includes a barn, a shed, a corn crib, and a well head. This cherished house is extremely important, both as an artifact whose history nearly spans that of the town itself and as a representation of the town's earliest architecture.
- *551 Wilbour-Brayton House (late 18th/early 19th century, et seq.): A $2\frac{1}{2}$ -story, shingled house with several later additions and remodelings. Built as a farmhouse by members of the Wilbour family, whose landholding in this part of town—south of Taylor's Lane and west of West Main Road—was extensive, it was moved some 500 feet east of its original site after 1870. The earlier additions may well date to the

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

- 19th century. In the 20th century, it was remodeled as a summer house in the Colonial Revival mode; with its extensive gardens and stone walls, it realizes an important early 20th-century vision of the American country house.
- *554 Edward Brayton House (1937): Albert Harkness, architect. An unusual, yet quintessentially 1930s, brick country house. It has an L plan, with the top portion of the L parallel to the road and the lower portion (the garage and service ell) of L projecting toward the road. The 2-story, 3-bay, main block of the house is centered in the long side, and to its south is a large 1-story ell. The decorative vocabulary of the house is striking: its general form owes something to the rural French exemplars that Harkness had used for many years, but the trim—particularly the spandrels that link the fenestration between stories on the main block and the casement windows—are almost Art Deco. During the 1930s, Harkness's work increasingly moved away from the picturesque revivalistic work he had done previously and toward a more modernist position, perhaps best seen in the Jenkes and Nightingale Houses on Warren's Point Road (q. v.). Brayton, a resident of Fall River, built this as a vacation house.
- *560 "Londonderry," the Cornelia C. Abbott House (19th century?, ca. 1925): A superb, picturesque, shingled house 2 stories high set end to the road and rambling to the east in several sections. The entrance on the north is within a trellised portico, and shuttered, small-pane windows fill the walls. The handsomely landscaped complex is surrounded by low stone walls with picket gates. Henry Chace owned this property in the mid-19th century, and his house or outbuildings or portions thereof may be included in the present structure. Early—and not so early—Little Compton houses were enlarged and remodeled in the early 20th century as country houses, many, like this, in a fashion reminiscent of "colonial" houses that expanded gradually and informally over the centuries.
- *561 William Peabody House, also known as the Betty Alden House (ca. 1690, ca. 1765, ca. 1890): A shingled, 2½-story house with a center chimney and asymmetrical facade with more-or-less center entrance. Outbuildings include barns, sheds, stone walls, and a corn crib. William Peabody (1664-1744) built this house probably about the same time that his father built a house nearby (see 521 West Main Road); as built, it comprised only the eastern section. Peabody's grandson John (1700-1767) sold the house to Pardon Gray (1737-1814) in 1762, and the Grays soon added the portion of the house west of the front door. The 2-story bay window on the west side, designed by Sydney Burleigh, was added at the end of the 19th century. The popular association of this house—and not that at 521 West Main Road—with Elizabeth Alden Peabody (1623-1717), daughter of John Alden and Priscilla Mullins is attributable to the more nearly 17th-century appearance of this house as well as to the possibility that she lived with her son after her husband died in 1707. Retaining much of its integrity, this is an important, intact Little Compton house.
- *570 Seaconnet Cemetery (mid-19th century et seq.): A small cemetery with a cast-iron picket fence and gate on the west side and low stone

WEST MAIN ROAD (continud)

walls on the other three sides. In addition to the tombstones and several sarcophagi is a squat, pyramidal roof bell tower. Sometimes referred to as the Wilbur Cemetery, it has stones of members of the Wilbur, Simmons, Brownell, and Peckham families.

- *581 "The Mill," the Adeline E. H. Slicer House (mid-19th century, 1886-87): Stone, Carpenter & Willson, architects. A striking shingled house built in two stages: the original section is a 3-story, conical-roof, octagonal-plan grist mill around which wraps a later 1½-story section with a sweeping roof, prominent stone chimneys, and inset porches. This is one of the town's earliest remodelings of a redundant agricultural structure for residential use—a phenomenon that began about the same time Little Compton was becoming popular as a residential summer colony. Mrs. Slicer employed the state's leading architectural firm to design the conversion and Sydney Burleigh, the Little Compton artist (and not coincidentally a good friend of the architects), to execute the decorative trim on the interior. This is an exquisite and unusual house, important for its artistic collaboration, for its method of construction, and as one of the town's best "shingle-style" summer houses of the 1880s.
- *590 Benjamin Seabury House (ca. 1880): A 2½-story, clapboard house with paired windows, a cross-gable roof, wrap-around porch, and 2-story ell at the rear. The design has a generic quality associated with houses inspired by the many pattern books available in the 19th century. Outbuildings include an old stone-and-frame barn, garage, and corn crib. The property is handsomely landscaped, with shrubs, trees, and stone walls. The house remains in ownership of the descendants of the original owner, but its use has shifted from farmhouse to vacation house.
- *601 Thomas Church House (ca. 1725 et seq.): A substantial and somewhat altered 2½-story, clapboard house with a 5-bay facade, center entrance with modern pediment and fanlight, plank-frame windows with 6-over-6 sash (probably not original) and 2 interior chimneys. This house originally had a center chimney; that and much of the original interior trim has been removed. Trees and stone walls surround the house, and there is a large barn at the rear. Church (1673/4-1746) was a carpenter and built this house himself; his son sold it to William Wilbour in 1756, and it remained in Wilbour family ownership for over two centuries.
- *627 Burgess House (late 18th century?): A shingled, 2½-story, center-chimney, 5-bay facade, center-entrance house. This is a typical rural Rhode Island farmhouse. This site has been inhabited since the early 18th century. Thomas Burgess (1668-1743) lived here, and his will refers to a house; that structure was either removed or incorporated into this one in the late 18th century. The Burgess family lived here until Thomas's great-grandson sold it in 1846 to Jonathan Wilbur (1804-1874), a shoemaker. It remained in the hands of the Wilburs and their heirs until 1961, when C. George Taylor, a Providence businessman, bought it for use as a summer house and restored it; the pedimented entrance, rescued from a demolished Little Compton house, was installed at that time.

WEST MAIN ROAD (continued)

- *640 Chase House (mid-/late 18th century et seq.): A rambling, shingled, 2-family dwelling, the product of a 20th-century expansion of an 18th-century house. The original section is the south-facing southern section: a 1½-story, center chimney structure with a 7-bay facade, center entrance with transom light, and narrow 8-over-12 sash. The earliest known occupant of the house is Philip Chase (1762-1844), who left it to his nephew Thomas W. Chase (1798-1862). It remained in Chase ownership until 1915 and then in Brownell ownership until 1946. The handsome additions to the north were added after the house became a vacation retreat in the mid-20th century.
- 665B Fort Church (1940): Several concrete and wood-frame buildings remain from this World War II installation, including barracks and a guard house. This is part of the observation system installed in Little Compton on the eve of World War II as an early-detection system in the pre-radar era. Related installations are on the east side of West Main Road (see numbers 696C and 700) and on Warren's Point Road (q. v.).
- 696C Fort Church Barracks (ca. 1940, mid-1950s): A shingled, 1-story, hip-roof house. This was built as part of the Fort Church (q.v.) installation and converted to residential use after government deaccessioning.
- 700 Fort Church Barracks (ca. 1940, mid-1950s): A 2½-story shingled house with a 5-bay facade and center entrance with sidelights. Built as part of the Fort Church (q. v.) installation, this was designed in simulation of typical Little Compton buildings as a means of camouflage against enemy aircraft.
- *716 "Seaconnet House," the Richmond House (ca. 1850 et seq.): A large, high-shouldered, clapboard dwelling set well back from the road with a 3-bay facade; center entrance within a 1-story, 3-bay porch; tripartite windows on the facade, including a modified Palladian window over the entrance; a dentil-and-bracket cornice; and rounded dormers in the gable roof. At rear—though now in separate ownership—are sheds and a barn, the latter converted into residential use. This is the oldest structure associated with the emergence of Little Compton as a summer colony; as early as the 1850s it was functioning as a country inn. Two large wings at the rear, now removed, accommodated guests. Isaac B. Richmond (see 59 South of Commons Road) operated this hotel in the 19th century, and his heirs continued to own the property until the 1970s. Before the formation of the Sakonnet Golf Club in 1909, (see 79 Sakonnet Point Road) summer residents used the acreage around this house as golf links.

WESTPORT HARBOR ROAD

- *4 Samuel Church House (ca. 1815): A large and handsome, square-plan shingled, Federal house with paired interior chimneys and two principal elevations, one on the northwest and one on the northeast. The northwest, pedimented-end-gable, 5-bay elevation faces the street and has a center entrance with sidelights and an elliptical fanlight; painted

WESTPORT HARBOR ROAD (continued)

white, it reads as the facade, but its entrance leads only to a vestibule. The northeast elevation, away from the road, has identical organization and detail, and its entrance leads to the center stair hall. At the rear of the property is a shingled, 3-story tower with sloping walls and a low hip roof. In front of the house is a wood picket fence with granite posts. Church came to Adamsville early in the century from Fairhaven, Massachusetts; he operated the salt works nearby and died in an accident there at age 33, before he completed this house. His heirs sold this property to four buyers, and it remained in multiple ownership and held in trust until 1851, when Thaddeus H. Church (1815-1905) bought the property, perhaps for the use of his mother, Ruth; he was a cotton merchant and lived in Mobile, Alabama, at the time. After his death, the property passed to his niece Claudia Church Hathaway. The tower was built soon after the Hathaways acquired the property; located over a well, the tower serves as a well head, with the pump on the 1st story, tank on the 3rd, and chauffeur's quarters on the 2nd.

- *9 "Gifford Place" (ca. 1800?): A well-preserved, 2½-story, shingled house with a center chimney, 3-bay facade with off-center entrance under a transom light frame by consoles and capped by an architrave; on the rear is a 2-story ell. Behind the house are sheds and a barn. The early owners of this house remain obscure; an early 20th-century deed refers to this as the "Gifford Place." John B. Taylor (1863-1928) lived here while he was Town Clerk of Little Compton.
- *10 Church-Manchester House (mid-19th century): A handsome, well-preserved, end-gable-roof vernacular Gothic cottage with a fretwork-trimmed, 1-story front porch, partially glazed, and pointed-arch windows in the attic of the gable end; the house sits back from the road behind a picket fence. Ebenezer Church, who founded the store at 10 Main Street (q. v.), probably built this house; in the late 19th century, this was the home of the Manchesters, who were partners and eventual business successors to Church.
- * 14 Manchester-Leary House (1842-43): An unusual, stucco-covered stone cottage with a 5-bay facade, recessed center entrance framed by sidelights, and brick chimneys at either end; there is a small, shingled addition on the north end. Clark S. Manchester, a mason, bought this property, then vacant, in January of 1842; in April of 1843, he sold it, with a "stone dwelling house," to Captain Timothy Leary (1812-90). This is one of the few stone cottages in Little Compton.

WILBOUR WOODS

- 2 Wilbour Woods (1849, ca. 1890, 1937): A largely natural wooded park of about 50 acres. Isaac Wilbour assembled this parcel in 1849 and developed it as a private, family park; he erected bridges over the streams and stones in memory of the Indians who had lived there. His son Philip continued the maintenance of the park, but after his death in 1933 it fell into neglect. In 1937, Elizabeth Mason Lloyd bought the property and gave it in memory of her mother-in-law, Jessie Bross Lloyd, to the town as a public park.

WILLOW AVENUE

- 39 Davenport-Grinnell Farm (mid-18th century et seq.): A shingled, center-chimney, salt-box gambrel-roof cottage with 3-bay, not-quite-symmetrical facade and center entrance; the only outbuilding is a barn. Thomas Davenport (1735-1820) probably built the house; it was standing by the time of the Revolution. His granddaughter Lois Palmer inherited the property and sold it to Dennis Grinnell in 1846; in 1878, Grinnell, then at Butler Hospital in Providence, was declared insane and his farm was sold at auction. At the time of the sale, it comprised 56 acres divided into meadows and pastures, "well walled and watered," and the barn was described as "nearly new."
- 86 Peckham-Brownell Farm (ca. 1882?): A 1½-story Modern Gothic house with a symmetrical main block and prominent ell on the south side, set back from the plane of the facade. The facade has a projecting central pavilion with a recessed entrance, paired windows, pierced bargeboards, strapwork brackets, and a triple-gable roof. Outbuildings include a barn and 2 sheds; old trees shade the stone-wall-lined property. The Peckhams lived on the opposite side of Willow Avenue in a house no longer standing. James E. Peckham (1839-1923) inherited this property from his father in 1850, and the house may have been built in the early 1880s, around the time of his daughter Harriet's marriage to William Bennett Brownell. It remained in hands of Peckham's descendants until 1984.
- 105 George C. Brownell Farm (before 1850): A 1 3/4-story, vernacular Greek Revival house with a 1-story ell set back from the plane of the facade on the southwest corner. The main block has a 5-bay facade framed by corner pilasters and a broad entablature; a center entrance with sidelights, pilasters, and entablature; and "eyebrow" windows in the entablature over the 1st story windows and door. One of the original paired interior chimneys has been removed. This is a typical mid-19th-century Little Compton house form. Outbuildings include barns and sheds, and stone walls line the property. Brownell was living here by 1850.
- 127 Gray-Briggs-Bullock Farm (early 19th century): A 2½-story, clapboard house set gable end to the street; a 1-story ell on the northwest is set well back from the plane of the facade. The 3-bay facade has an off-center entrance framed by an early 20th-century latticework porch with built-in benches. Joseph B. Gray farmed here in the first half of the 19th century; when he sold the farm to Alfred Briggs in 1854, it included "a Dwelling House, Corn-Crib, Two Barns, and Other Out Buildings." Walter J. D. Bullock bought the property in 1920, and it remains in the hands of his heirs.
- 176 Congregational Parsonage (1870): A 2½-story dwelling—now covered with asphalt shingles—with a 3-bay facade, center entrance, bracketed hoods over doors and windows, and bracket-and-dentil cornice; an early 20th-century latticework porch with built-in benches (nearly identical to that at 127 Willow Avenue [q. v.]) frames the entrance. This parsonage was built for the nearby Congregational Church (see 1 Commons) just before the church itself was considerably remodeled.
- 182 St. Catherine of Siena Roman Catholic Church (1910, 1948, 1984): A much altered 1-story shingled building with a cruciform plan. This is the first structure built in Little Compton for Roman Catholic worship;

WILLOW AVENUE (continued)

the parish previously met in a house north of the Commons. When the parish built a new house of worship in 1948, this was moved here from its original site on the south side of Simmons Road and converted into a bowling alley. It was once again transformed into a shopping mall in the mid 1980s.

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Providence, RI 02903

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Design & Layout: Joyce Gray Baker

Printing: Des Offset Inc.